Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Daily Report
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FBIS-NES-95-096 *18 May 1995*

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Arab-Israeli Talks

Talks on Self-Rule Elections Conclude in Cairo

Issue of Election Observers Discussed

NC1705141995 Paris AFP in English
1256 GMT 17 May 95

[Report by Mona Salem]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Cairo, May 17 (AFP)—Israeli and PLO negotiators here on Wednesday [17 May] tackled the issue of the make-up of an international supervision team for Palestinian self-rule elections and decided to seek European help.

"The Palestinians have asked that the European Union take charge of coordination of the supervision," head Palestinian negotiator Sa'ib 'Urayqat told AFP.

"We have proposed putting in place an observer team from the United States, Russia, Norway, Canada, Japan, the United Nations, Egypt and Jordan," 'Urayqat added.

His Israeli counterpart, Yo'el Singer, said they would both travel to Brussels to meet EU officials on the issue of observers.

"The elections will need hundreds and maybe thousands of observers coming from many countries," he said.

Singer said the negotiations had reached a "delicate phase," such as the dispute over polling stations in Jerusalem. "We are exploring ideas about these issues," he said.

"The elections could be held two or three months after the signing of an agreement and the implementation of redeployment," Singer added, referring to an Israeli army pull-out from West Bank towns.

The two sides began three days of negotiations in Egypt on Monday, in an effort to speed up an agreement on the election of a self-rule council and the extension of Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank.

'Urayqat said Tuesday's talks addressed "the respective responsibilities of the Israeli army and the Palestinian police and the margin of action for each" in the West Bank and Gaza during the election campaign and the voting.

The two sides were making "arrangements to specify for example which party will act in those areas where there will be joint Israeli-Palestinian patrols or in case of possible attacks by Jewish settlers against Palestinians."

"We also brought up security problems connected to Israeli settlements in the West Bank," he added.

'Urayqat underlined that the Israeli army would withdraw "from all the towns, the villages, the refugee camps and the hamlets in the West Bank."

He said that security arrangements would be finalized "when talks have concluded on a detailed plan for the Israeli redeployment outside population centers in the West Bank."

Military officials from the two sides are currently negotiating in Israel over the Israeli pull-out, which under the September 1993 Declaration of Principles on autonomy must precede elections.

Singer has said talks would deal with security issues such as public meetings, demonstrations and security in voting booths, as well as fixing a date for electoral registration.

The two sides are still split over participation of East Jerusalem's 155,000 Palestinians in elections, who the PLO want to be allowed to run for council seats. [passage omitted]

East Jerusalemites' Participation Viewed

JN1705183095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic
1500 GMT 17 May 95

[From the "With the Events" feature]

[FBIS Translated Text] Let us move to the major preoccupation of the Palestinians and Israelis alike; namely, the issue of holding elections in the territories, which has been negotiated in Cairo. The Cairo round of talks was concluded this afternoon. The issue of international supervision of the elections has been settled. The Palestinian side will be responsible for security at polling stations. With regard to the issues debated and the progress made in this round of talks, let us listen to the report prepared by our correspondent Yasir 'Atilah:

[Begin recording] ['Atilah] Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat [minister of local government in the Palestinian Authority] began his statements to us by addressing a major issue that is still a bone of contention between the two negotiating sides; namely, the issue of the East Jerusalemites' participation in the elections in terms of standing for election and voting. What does Dr. Sa'ib have to say about this?

['Urayqat] The participation by Jerusalemites in the elections in terms of standing for election, voting, the placement of polling stations in Jerusalem, and the conducting election campaigns there, will not prejudge the status of Jerusalem. It is true that the status of Jerusalem will be determined in the final status negotiations. We officially presented a paper to this

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effect to the Israeli side. The Israeli side responded by saying that Jerusalemites will take part in the elections only in terms of voting, adding that those standing for election must have addresses outside Jerusalem. We have heard such utterances before. Israeli Prime Minister Rabin said at the Knesset yesterday that no polling stations will be allowed to open in Jerusalem, and that there will be bans on participation in the elections. We asked the Israelis: Do you want to force your dictates on us? It is inconceivable that the negotiations on the elections annex to the interim agreement can be concluded without working out an agreement on the Jerusalem issue.

['Atilah] Are we to understand that the issue of installing polling stations in East Jerusalem and the East Jerusalemites' right to stand for election are still unresolved?

['Urayqat] Yes. That is true. We still profoundly disagree in this regard. Let us examine the issue. If these issues remain unresolved, they have to be referred to His Excellency President 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Rabin. If they fail to agree on them, then the issue has to be referred to international arbitration. This is because this is a crucial issue; and we cannot conceive of an agreement on the elections annex without the actual participation of the Jerusalemites in the elections in terms of voting and running for the elections.

['Atilah] The two sides agreed that the Palestinians will be in charge of security at polling stations. What other security arrangements to be enforced during the elections were discussed?

['Urayqat] We discussed possible attacks by settlers on Palestinian election rallies, the possible use of carbombs, and similar acts. We want the Israeli side to table measures aimed at deterring any acts that could be carried out by some Israeli elements to sabotage the elections. Moreover, roads will be patrolled by joint forces. Many other complex issues need to be worked out to ensure that the Israelis do not interfere in the elections, nor in the international supervision. Agreement on the relevant security arrangements will be reached after the maps are examined, and after agreement is reached on redeployment.

['Atilah] What about international supervision?

['Urayqat] As a matter of fact, the issue of international supervision has been settled. A few months ago, we presented a paper to the Israeli side, saying that we would like to invite the EU members, the United Nations, the United States, Russia, Norway, Canada, Japan, Egypt, Jordan, and any other interested international organizations to monitor the elections.

['Atilah] Regarding the logistics pertaining to international supervision, they are being examined by the EU, Israel, and the Palestinian Authority. They will be discussed later. As regards membership of the Council that will be elected, the two sides still disagree on this, Dr. 'Urayqat said. The Israeli side says that membership should not exceed 30, whereas the Palestinian side demands that the membership total 100. However, the talks in this round have not addressed this issue.

Yo'el Singer, head of the Israeli side to the talks, has said that the redeployment must be debated in other channels. Hence, only the security issues pertaining to elections, such as the holding of popular rallies, election campaigns, and demonstrations, and correcting voter registers were discussed. He asserted that intensive talks were held to reach agreement ahead of the 1 July deadline. He believes that it is very possible to do so. [end recording]

Further on Talks, 'Urayqat Remarks

JN1705203795 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1730 GMT 17 May 95

[Report by Hanadi al-Imam in Cairo]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian-Israeli Elections Committee concluded its work under dark clouds, just as it started. Local Government Minister Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat used this term to describe this round of talks because Israeli constraints blocked progress. The issue of the participation of Jerusalemites in the elections is still a bone of contention between the two sides, particularly in the aftermath of statements by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, which turned the negotiations into dictates when he said that Jerusalemites will take part in the elections only as voters. He further added that there will be no polling stations in Jerusalem.

The Palestinian and Israeli sides discussed the security arrangements to be enforced during the elections. The Palestinian police are expected to be responsible for security during the elections. The two sides agreed to coordinate in order to avert terrorist operations by settlers during election campaigns. Hence, joint patrols will be deployed during the elections. The two sides also agreed that the security measures that will be enforced during the elections will be submitted to the committee charged with examining the redeployment of the Israeli Army in the West Bank.

With regard to international monitoring of the elections, the EU will coordinate among the states that will take part in monitoring all phases of the elections. The Palestinian delegation underlined the need to achieve internationally recognized standards during the elections.

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Moreover, it announced that it will abide by the requirements that could be demanded of it within the context of the relevant EU program. The Palestinian delegation also asked the Israelis to reciprocate by complying with this program.

In a related development, a tripartite committee, comprising Palestine, Israel, and the EU will be set up to discuss facilitating the mission of international monitors during the elections. The Palestinian and Israeli sides will discuss these facilities in Brussels next week.

As for the Jerusalem issue, and the UN Security Council [UNSC] meetings on it, Dr. 'Urayqat said that if the United States uses the veto to block the passage of a draft UNSC resolution on the issue, the entire Arab diplomacy will be called into question, particularly since this diplomacy has, since the Gulf war, looked upon the United States as if it were a new Roman Empire.

Israeli Delegation Departs Cairo

NC1705192095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1858 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 17 May (MENA)—The Israeli delegation led by Yo'el Singer, legal adviser to the Foreign Ministry and head of the Israeli delegation to the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations held recently in Cairo, left the Egyptian capital tonight.

PA's Sha'th, Israel's Shahal Hold News Conference

JN1705202195 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1730 GMT 17 May 95

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation, has emphasized that within the next 10 days, a crossing will be opened for transporting Palestinian goods to Egypt.

In a news conference held with Israeli Police Minister Moshe Shahal at the Rafah crossing at the end of their field tour during which they visited border crossings, he added that a Palestinian airport will be opened in the area of Qarni, to the east of al-Shuja'iyah and Arab markets will be opened for Palestinian goods.

He also said he will meet in Tel Aviv with General Shahor tomorrow to discuss the construction of the airport.

Dr. Sha'th said strategic issues are still pending. These issues are the redeployment of the Israeli Army in the West Bank in preparation for the legislative elections and the formation of the Palestinian legislative council, and the subject of Jerusalem which is very important to us.

The minister of planning and international cooperation said there are daily problems at the crossings especially concerning the transportation of goods and the movement of citizens. He stressed that the Israeli violations at the crossings conflict with the agreement. Dr. Sha'th warned that failure to expedite solving all problems will lead to an all-out explosion.

Dr. Sha'th, Minister Shahal, and Israeli Environment Minister Yosi Sarid met at the Rafah crossing and discussed the daily problems the citizens face while entering the border crossing. They also discussed the impact of the military siege imposed on Gaza by Israel and how to lift this siege.

Dr. Sha'th stressed that the problem is in implementing what had been agreed on, and said the National Authority [NA; Palestinian Authority, PA] wants real and accurate coordination in order to implement the Declaration of Principles [DOP].

For his part, Shahal said that there is goodwill on both the Palestinian and Israeli sides. He said Israel wants the peace process to continue.

He emphasized the importance of implementing the second stage of the DOP concerning the redeployment and holding legislative elections. He expressed hope that all pending problems will be resolved within the coming days.

Shahal praised the progress realized by the NA in spite of the lack of infrastructure in the NA areas.

The two ministers visited Erez, east al-Shuja'iyah, Rafah, and Qarni crossing points and were acquainted with the work there and the problems facing citizens.

Shahal Sees 2d Stage of Accord by 1 Jul

TA1705170695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1500 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Police Minister Moshe Shahal says Israel and the Palestinians can make progress on the interim phase of the self-rule accord within the allotted 1 July deadline. [Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1200 GMT on 17 May reports that Shahal had said that "it will be possible to proceed with the second stage of the Oslo agreement as early as 1 June."]

Shahal was speaking in Rafah where he and Environment Minister Yosi Sarid held talks with the Palestinian Authority official Nabil Sha'th. Earlier, the three toured the Erez, Qarni, and Rafah crossing points. More on this from No'omi Segal.

[Begin Segal recording] Police Minister Shahal struck an optimistic note on negotiations with the Palestinians,

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saying that all differences can be bridged. He was speaking after a meeting with PLO official Nabil Sha'th at Rafah. Sha'th was also upbeat. He said that he has faith in the peace process despite the hardships.

Some caution was heard from Environment Minister Yosi Sarid, who also took part in the talks. He thought Israel and the Palestinians could conclude negotiations on the next phase of the self-rule accord by 1 July, but he warned that should the sides fail to do so, Israel's relations with the Palestinians and the Arab world would suffer a serious blow.

Earlier, the three officials toured the Erez, Qarni, and Rafah crossing points, a visit that, whether by coincidence or not, comes exactly one year after the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] pulled out of Gaza. They reviewed security checks at the site and pledged to look for ways to make the processing of goods out of Gaza efficient, with minimal disruption to the economic lives of the Palestinians. Shahal said that a terminal for the transport of goods between Gaza and Egypt will open in about 10 days at Rafah. He also said that restrictions on the flow of people and goods from the Strip into Israel soon will be eased. Currently, some 30,000 Palestinians who meet certain requirements have been issued work permits to enter Israel despite the closure. [end recording]

Multilateral Committee Meets in Switzerland

Al-Husayni Speaks on Jerusalem Issue

TA1705125795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Faysal al-Husayni said the problem of Jerusalem is turning into a black hole which may swallow up all the hopes for a political arrangement in the Middle East.

Al-Husayni was speaking in Montreux, Switzerland, at the opening of the multilateral steering committee meetings.

Al-Husayni also condemned the United States for its support of Israel on the issue of land expropriations in Jerusalem, thus reacting to the Security Council's ongoing debate over the proposal to condemn Israel because of the land expropriations.

Security Council sources reported today that the United States may use its veto for the first time in five years to prevent the adoption of such a resolution.

U.S. Motion 'Disagreeable' to Israel

TA1705151995 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 May 95 pp A1, A2

[Report by political correspondent Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Text] Israel now finds itself isolated at the discussions of the steering committee of the multilateral talks which began yesterday in Montreux, Switzerland, with an informal meeting of delegation heads. All the Arab delegations demanded to place the issue of Jerusalem at the head the agenda and to establish a multilateral committee on Jerusalem. The United States accepted the Arab demand, and the issue of Jerusalem will top today's agenda at the formal opening of the steering committee's plenum.

Israel is opposed to the establishment of a multilateral committee on Jerusalem, asserting that this issue will be discussed between the Palestinians and Israel within the framework of the negotiations on a permanent arrangement. Although all decisions at the multilateral talks must have the support of a general consensus in order to be adopted, Israel does not wish to appear intransigent by vetoing the decision. Efforts to formulate a compromise were made last night.

Faysal al-Husayni, the head of the Palestinian delegation opened yesterday's discussion by saying that "the steps taken by Israel in Jerusalem threaten the entire peace process." He officially demanded the formation of a multilateral committee on Jerusalem affairs. Nabil Fahmi, head of the Egyptian delegation, vehemently condemned the land expropriations and expressed Egypt's "deep disappointment" with Israel's unilateral steps.

Muhammad al-Kurdi, the deputy foreign minister of Saudi Arabia, said that "the Arab states are beginning to lose faith in the peace process because of Israel's actions in the field. There will be no solution to the conflict without first resolving the issue of Jerusalem." Ambassador Nasir Tu'aymi, head of the Moroccan delegation [name and title as transliterated], said that "the land expropriations recall the deportation of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists in late 1992: It was carried out a very sensitive stage in the process, and therefore we cannot make do with a decision by the Israeli Government." Amb. Fayiz al-Tarawinah, head of the Jordanian delegation, insisted that the committee devote the plenum's formal debate to the Jerusalem issue.

Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin, head of the Israeli delegation, attempted to deflect the harsh criticism by saying that "land was expropriated from Jews as well as from Arabs." Beilin noted the cabinet decision

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of 14 May and pointed out that this was the first time Israel decided not to expropriate additional land for housing. Beilin proposed settling for an informal debate, without devoting the plenum meeting to the Jerusalem issue; however, his proposal was rejected by U.S. representative Robert Pelletreau, chairman of the steering committee, who accepted the Arab position.

Sources in the Israeli delegation expressed great concern today over the motion for the agenda submitted by the Americans, which includes three clauses Israel finds highly disagreeable: Jerusalem; the (Palestinians') right of self-determination; and the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. The delegation of the host country, Switzerland, will submit a proposal today on establishing another multilateral working group on human rights. Saudi Arabia is very much opposed to this. In talks held prior to the meeting, Israel proposed a compromise calling for the formation of a "working group for human relations in the Middle East," which would also incorporate a seminar on Jerusalem.

Additional issues that will come up for discussion at the steering committee include the unification of working groups on water and environment; holding the economic working group's meetings once a year instead of biannually; and issuing an announcement on the convening of the plenum of the multilateral arms control talks at the level of foreign ministers, as agreed upon by Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and his Egyptian counterpart, 'Amr Musa. Israel is demanding that the above summit be attended by foreign ministers "from all the countries in the region."

Israelis Say Talks Failed, Blame Arabs

TA1805070795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli delegation to the steering committee of the multilateral talks, currently in session in Switzerland, has said that the Arabs made the talks fail by raising issues that are not relevant to the multinational talks, such as the land confiscations in Jerusalem, the release of Palestinian prisoners, and the closure on the territories.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0405 GMT on 18 May carries a similar report adding: "The Israeli delegation also criticized U.S. representative Robert Pelletreau for allowing a discussion on the status of Jerusalem upon the Arabs' demand and contrary to the Israeli stand."]

Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin, the delegation head, is to hold another meeting with his Tunisian counterpart today. In their last meeting, the Tunisian deputy foreign minister refused to discuss issues pertaining to the relations between the two countries.

Israel Allows Palestinian Investors To Return to Gaza

JN1705102895 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0700 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Jamal Zaqqut, head of the Palestinian negotiating delegation to the Palestinian-Israeli liaison committees, has said Israel agreed to allow 133 Palestinian investors residing abroad to return to the Palestinian Authority areas and invest in them.

Zaqqut added it was agreed at a meeting yesterday to give 49 investors the right to reside in Gaza. Zaqqut said the Palestinian and Israeli sides agreed to formulate a plan to facilitate the return to Gaza of Palestinians residing in the Egyptian city of Rafah. These Palestinian families are expected to begin returning on Monday [22 May].

Palestinian Affairs

Reaction to U.S. Vote on Jerusalem Land Issue

UN Envoy Criticizes U.S. Veto

JN1805084695 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0800 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Nasir al-Qudwah, Palestinian permanent representative at the United Nations, has said that voting in favor of the resolution by 14 out of 15 states proves that the international community rejects the Israeli confiscation of lands in Jerusalem. He said the U.S. veto harms the Security Council and the United States. It will also complicate the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, he added.

Kanafani: U.S. Veto 'Cannot Be Justified'

JN1805075195 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0700 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Marwan Kanafani, President Yasir 'Arafat's political adviser, has stated that President 'Arafat is disappointed with the stand taken by the United States at the UN Security Council last night. Kanafani said: In the eyes of the Palestinian people, the U.S. veto of the international resolution against the illegal Israeli confiscation of Palestinian land may have robbed the United States of the credibility and trust the Palestinian people hoped this superpower would preserve—a superpower that has been upholding the negotiated settlement plan for the Middle East conflict

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from the very beginning. Kanafani said that Washington's stand cannot be justified and will further complicate the obstacles and difficulties besetting the peace march.

Kanafani wondered about Washington's ability to pressure Israel to implement the peace agreements' provisions if the United States itself is adopting a stand that contravenes the letter and spirit of the Declaration of Principles and all the agreements that have followed it.

Executive Committee To Discuss U.S. Veto

JN1805082795 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0800 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother Faruq Qaddumi, Palestinian foreign minister and head of the PLO Political Department, has stated that the PLO Executive Committee and the PLO Central Council will meet in Tunis on 1 June.

Interviewed on the "Today's Events" program, to be broadcast at 1400 [1100 GMT] today, Qaddumi added that the PLO Executive Committee secretary has issued invitations to the meeting.

Brother Abu-al-Lutf [Qaddumi] said the Executive Committee will discuss the entire peace process in the wake of the U.S. veto of a draft resolution on Israel's confiscation of lands in East Jerusalem.

Veto Called 'Blow' to Peace

JN1805115395 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0815 GMT 18 May 95

[Commentary from the "The Chain Will Inevitably Break" program: "The American Veto Is a Stab to the Peace Process"]

[FBIS Translated Text] We have not forgotten, but have pretended to forget due to our awareness of the nature and circumstances of the stage. We have pretended to have forgotten, imagining that the world master, the United States, has abandoned its policy of antagonizing nations and killing their hopes. We pretended to forget when the White House master, who came to power carrying the umbrella of justice and human rights, stood handsomely in the White House garden side by side to the symbol of our people [Yasir 'Arafat] to sign the peace agreement with Israel. At that moment, we recalled America's black past and said the scene of the international signing ceremony will be enough to dispel the black picture. Days passed, and the United States announced it is the sponsor and first guarantor of this peace.

The implementation of the agreement began and we bravely engaged in the battle of peace, believing that the other partner, Mr. Yitzhaq Rabin, will respect his signature and his word. However, right from the beginning, Rabin could not abandon his aggressive nature and spirit of occupation dwelling in his mind and determining his political behavior. The Palestinians began to suffer from evasion and procrastination, which became the hallmark of Rabin's Labor government after the agreement was signed. Once again we recalled past history. This time we recalled a momentous event related to Jerusalem. Rabin does not know what this city means to us. It is in our memory and our hearts. It is not like other cities; it is not Chicago, the Falklands, or Hiroshima. This city is neither destructible nor forgettable. It cannot be cancelled by a decision. Association with it cannot be severed by all of the claims put forward by Rabin and Peres, or by Olmert [Jerusalem mayor], who brags of historical rights. Jerusalem cannot be scrapped from memory by bulldozers. It inhabits us and we inhabit it. It is the past, present, and future. It is the heart, conscience, and love that continues for thousands of years and until doomsday. We recalled the past when we said that the era of colonialism, oppression, veto, and blind U.S. backing of Israel was over, only to be shocked yesterday by the sharp American knife the American UN envoy brandished in the face of the Palestinian people and these people's national aspirations, and, consequently, in the face of peace. This behooves us to dig up memory once again to get that bloody tape that is stored in the memory of our people on the stands of the superpower, the United States, and how it behaved arrogantly when the Israeli death warplanes were killing, slaughtering, and displacing them. We remember how the veto was brandished like a sharp sword against any international resolution in favor of our people.

Yesterday, we pondered and asked: Has the American beast returned to dwell with the memory of the White House master, and has Clinton's administration abandoned its supportive and neutral role that guarantees the peace process? Are we approaching a new era in which the devilish alliance between Israel and America is being bolstered? These are valid and bitter questions we pose to the world. Where is the language of peace recently adopted by the United States? Where is the credibility of the White House master's signature to the peace agreement? Consequently, where are we, the Palestinian people, in the U.S. administration's mind, which dealt a blow to us and to peace and the entire world yesterday when it presented its veto as a present to the policy of aggression, expansion, settlement activity, and confiscation of lands in Jerusalem? Clinton himself does not know what Jerusalem means to us, to our people, and to our nation.

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The world is viewing with rejection and fury the U.S. stand. Our people, who waged the battle of peace, depending on their capabilities, cannot find a good reason for the American blow which reminded us of the image of the United States we detest, the image of a United States that protects terrorism, the image of a United States that encourages Israel's terrorism, occupation, and aggression; the image of a United States which says yes to peace before television cameras, but adopts a different policy in official lobbies, putting all its weight behind the Israeli policy of procrastination, evasion, and confiscation.

Will the attitude adopted yesterday and earlier herald the return of the past American role which destroyed the world and our people and will destroy the entire peace process in the Middle East if it continues in such a manner?

Sha'th: U.S. Stance on Israeli Practices 'Biased'

NC1705110995 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1015 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 17 May (MENA)— Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation in the Palestinian National Authority [PNA], has stressed that the Palestinians insist that Israel must retract its latest decision on the expropriation of 53 hectares of land owned by Palestinians in East Jerusalem.

Sha'th said in statements to the weekly magazine AL-MUSAWWAR, which will be published in its issue for Friday, 19 May, that Israel's credibility is shattered and Israel should have adhered to the articles of the Oslo Agreement.

Sha'th described the U.S. stance on the Israeli practices as negative, bad, and very much biased toward Israel. He said that this bias is incomprehensible and unjustifiable, particularly the weakness in putting pressure on Israel when it emerges from the peace process and its conditions and bases.

Sha'th clarified that the attempt to link the issue of Jerusalem with the current first phase negotiations goes along with the peace process. The evidence is that the Liaison Committee which held a round of negotiations discussed virtually nothing else but the Jerusalem issue.

He affirmed that the Palestinians will not accept having Israel change the actual situation in Jerusalem and then claim at the negotiating table that discussing the subject of Jerusalem is postponed.

PA Spokesman Hails League Role in Expropriation Summit

NC1605120295 Paris AFP in English
1106 GMT 15 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Gaza City, Gaza Strip, May 15 (AFP)— Yasir 'Arafat's Palestinian Authority on Monday [15 May] praised the Arab League's moves to hold a summit on Israel's confiscation of Palestinian land in East Jerusalem.

"We welcome the call by the Arab League and the decision of secretary general 'Ismat Abd-al-Majid to go to Morocco to prepare the summit," 'Arafat's spokesman Nabil Abu-Rudaynah told AFP.

"It supports the Palestinian cause and shows just how important is the question of Jerusalem and the Moslem holy sites."

'Abd-al-Majid was to go to Morocco on Tuesday to try to persuade King Hassan II to call the summit.

"Israel cannot have both land and peace," 'Abd-al-Majid said in Cairo.

An Arab League official said Egypt, Jordan, the PLO, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia and Syria were expected to take part.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin pledged Sunday that Israel would seize no more land in east Jerusalem, which it annexed in 1967, but he upheld the latest confiscation of 53 hectares (131 acres) to build homes for Jews.

'Abd-al-Majid said Rabin's decision was "dangerous, because it means that Israel is continuing its aggression and ignoring the feelings of Arab and Islamic countries.

"We cannot keep quiet when faced with this aggression and Israel cannot impose its hegemony on the Arab nation."

The United Nations Security Council was to resume debate on the confiscations later Monday.

Official on Israel's 'Secret' Decision To Freeze Oslo Pact

NC1805085695 Cairo MENA in Arabic
0745 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 18 May (MENA)— Palestinian Ambassador Sa'id Kamal, Arab League assistant secretary general, has stated that Israel made a secret decision to freeze the Oslo Agreement. He noted that Israel's decision to expropriate land in Jerusalem is not a personal decision. It was preceded by the establishment of a secret committee that agreed on the method of seizing this land, he added.

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In an interview with AL-JUMHURIYAH published today, Kamal expressed his belief that by seizing the Jerusalem land Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin wanted to freeze the peace process. He noted that the expropriation decision aims to hold the Palestinians responsible before the entire world for suspending the peace talks because Rabin knows very well that Jerusalem is a postponed case. He emphasized that Israel wants to concentrate now and for some time on the Syrian track, consolidate the Jordanian-Israeli treaty, and mend the rift in Egyptian-Israeli relations.

Kamal pointed out that Israel's rulers, from Labor or Likud, do not want to withdraw from the West Bank or redeploy their troops in the West Bank and Gaza. He noted that the Israeli Cabinet endorsed the Jerusalem land expropriation decision in a malicious way and promised not to seize more land in Jerusalem for building purposes, which means that land could be seized for other purposes.

'Arafat Urges Darawshah To Withdraw No-Confidence Motion

TA1705082795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The head of Yasir 'Arafat's bureau telephoned Knesset Member [MK] 'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawshah and asked him to withdraw the motion of no confidence in the government presented by his Arab Democratic Party over land seizures in Jerusalem. Dr. Ramzi al-Khuri stressed that the PLO leader believes that overthrowing the Rabin government would be a grave mistake which would harm the peace process.

MK Darawshah told our correspondent Hayim Hecht that his party's secretariat will discuss the issue later in the week irrespective of 'Arafat's call. Our decision will be based on Israeli party considerations, he said.

Qaddumi Demands Suspension of Negotiations

MM1705160195 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 17 May 95 p 5

[Interview with PLO Political Department Head Faruq Qaddumi by Rashid Khashanah in Tunis "yesterday"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Khashanah] The Executive Committee decided in its recent meetings in Tunis to reactivate PLO institutions. But every day we see a decline in the PLO's role and an increasing reduction in its organs and offices. How do you explain this?

[Qaddumi] Everyone is seeking to reactivate the institutions. But all we need is money. PLO offices are at present suffering dire financial straits, and their staffs are not receiving their salaries regularly. We are working to secure these essentials. [passage omitted]

[Khashanah] The Palestinian Authority recently appointed its representatives to a number of capitals. Does that not mean the beginning of the end of the PLO?

[Qaddumi] The PLO is the Palestinian people's representative in accordance with the Cairo agreement of May last year, and in accordance with the Palestinian Authority's right to establish diplomatic relations with other states. This is in the knowledge that the PLO is the only quarter recognized by UN member states, and it is the quarter representing the Palestinian people.

And despite the financial straits PLO institutions are experiencing, we know that the attempts being made to besiege the PLO will not succeed. Because the Palestinian people believe that the PLO is the sole national body expressing their identity. [passage omitted]

[Khashanah] The role of the Palestinian Council for Development and Reconstruction (PCDR) has gradually declined and become ineffective since the self-rule agreement began to be implemented. How do you explain that paralysis in your capacity as the council's head?

[Qaddumi] There are attempts — made primarily by Israel — to obstruct and paralyze the council. But there are also other factors which we can attribute to some Palestinians' ignorance of the importance of this economic council. This is in addition to the lack of organization, cooperation, and coordination among the various economic bodies inside [the self-rule areas]. We expect the newborn Palestinian Authority to go through a trial period and to make some mistakes. [passage omitted]

[Khashanah] Israeli Communication Minister Shulamit Aloni announced following the weekly cabinet meeting Saturday that the decision to confiscate 53 hectares of land in Jerusalem would not be revoked, and Shim'on Peres emphasized this position. What is the Palestinian reply to that Israeli action?

[Qaddumi] Israel continues to pursue the policy of nibbling away [at Palestinian land]. It has no desire for peace, nor is it ready for it. And its social, economic, and military structure proves that it is not adapting itself to peace — which prompted me to voice reservations about the Oslo agreement from the start.

[Khashanah] And in the end?

[Qaddumi] The Palestinians cannot comply with this agreement while Israel continues to reject and contradict it through its successive measures. Israel's real aim is to

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absorb [isti'ab] the West Bank and to besiege inhabited Palestinian areas by "fattening" the settlements, building roads to link them, and expanding settlement areas in Jerusalem so that the majority of its population would become Jewish. [passage omitted]

[Khashanah] The Executive Committee attached specific terms to its agreement to continue the negotiations with Israel. Israel has violated these terms by expanding settlements around Jerusalem. But the Palestinians yesterday returned to the negotiations with the Israelis. How will the Central and Executive Committees act vis-a-vis that step?

[Qaddumi] The Central and Executive Committees issued a statement following their recent meetings. All members acknowledged that Israel has undermined the foundations of the peace process. And the Executive Committee questioned the benefit of continuing the negotiations, demanding that the United States, the EU, Egypt, Norway, and the other parties concerned with the negotiations participate in them. But, for reasons we do not know, the Palestinian Authority could not adhere to its decision.

The negotiations must be suspended, because Israel has effectively suspended them. It is not negotiating on the main issues, such as the redeployment of its forces, the transfer of powers to the Palestinians, a halt to settlement building and land confiscation, a halt to the closure of [Palestinian] areas, and the release of prisoners and detainees.

So negotiations have become merely idle talk with no political substance. As a Palestinian official, I try to convince every leader of my view, because continuing the negotiations would harm the Palestinian issue and frustrate the forces supporting and backing us. Having embarked on several actions, and violating its pledges, Israel confiscated 53 hectares of Palestinian land in the context of its violations of international legitimacy. So what is left of the (Palestinian-Israeli) agreement for Israel to comply with? Thus I renew my invitation to national forces and leading Palestinian symbols to undertake an urgent dialogue to study this deteriorating situation and to declare political orientations agreed by all. [passage omitted]

'Arafat Adviser on Jordan Ties, Meeting With King

JN1705141995 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 17 May 95

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, adviser to President Yasir 'Arafat, has hailed the distinguished Palestinian-Jordanian relations.

In a statement to Voice of Palestine today, Abu-Rudaynah stressed that the continuous meetings between President 'Arafat and King Husayn strengthen these relations, especially since they illustrate the depth of the fraternal relations between the two brotherly Palestinian and Jordanian peoples.

The president's adviser added: We expect further progress in these relations during the expected visit to Jordan by President 'Arafat.

President 'Arafat and King Husayn are due to meet in Amman on 23 May to discuss developments of the peace process in light of the Israeli intransigence and procrastination. Chief among the issues that will be discussed is the confiscation of the Palestinian land in Jerusalem. They will also discuss ways of coordinating and supporting the collective Arab stance, especially on the summit level. The meeting will also deal with bilateral issues between the two sisterly countries.

Abu-Middayn Clarifies Israel 'Enemy' Remarks

MM1505115295 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 13 May 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by 'Ali al-Salih: "Palestinian 'Minister' Considers Israel Main Enemy"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London — Palestinian Justice Minister Furayh Abu-Middayn said yesterday that the statement attributed to President 'Arafat about his failure in connection with the Oslo agreement was not accurate and that what was said was: "We sense the failure and shortcomings of the Oslo agreement, which we had hoped would be the beginning, but when we look at the facts and the issues of the detainees and Jerusalem we find ourselves to have acted inadequately in the agreement and what followed."

In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Abu-Middayn said: "These were my own personal words not the words of President 'Arafat, whom I represented at the first congress of the Palestinian Democratic Party (FIDA). There was no prior approval by President 'Arafat of what I was going to say, and I did not expect it to be interpreted the way it has been interpreted."

Abu-Middayn confirmed that he did say that "Israel will remain the Palestinian people's main enemy, not only now but also in the future." But he said that he "was expressing his own personal views, not President 'Arafat's position."

He added: "The speech I made in the president's name was an improvised not a written speech, and I was expressing my own personal opinion. In view of what is happening now, that is my opinion." Abu-Middayn, a lawyer by profession, explained that "what

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I say represents the view of the vast majority of the Palestinian people because what is happening and what Israel is doing now confirm that there is no peace process at all."

Abu-Middayn expressed anger at the Israeli attitude, especially on the question of Jerusalem. He said: "Really, when one links such developments pertaining to the question of moving the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, the expropriation of Jerusalem land, and the issue of the detainees, one does arrive at that conclusion."

He added: "To be honest, I was explaining the situation to the Palestinian public in order to keep the options open. The Oslo agreement is not ideal. It did not tackle two essential issues: The question of settlement in the occupied territory and the question of Palestinian detainees."

He continued: "These two issues should have been resolved in Oslo. We are suffering today because we did not resolve them there."

Asked if President 'Arafat would agree with what he said, he replied: "I have not seen the president for two days. All that happened was that he telephoned me and asked me to represent him at the FIDA congress."

Asked if President 'Arafat would have to apologize for these statements, bearing in mind that on another occasion in South Africa he did describe Israel as the enemy and then had to apologize later, describing that statement as a slip of the tongue, Abu-Middayn said: "Maybe."

Police Chief on Seizure of Identity Cards

JN1705201195 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1730 GMT 17 May 95

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] In continuation of the Palestinian police campaigns to enforce law and order and to check chaos in the homeland, the Palestinian police have seized inflammatory material aimed at spreading corruption and chaos.

At a news conference at the Public Security Department in Gaza today, Brigadier General Ghazi al-Jabali, director general of the Palestinian police force in the Gaza Strip, said that the police seized 1,500 Israeli identity cards and 1,700 identity card forms from the house of a Hamas Movement member. He pointed out that these identity cards are sold to subsidize the movement's funds.

Brig. Gen. al-Jabali said that the three persons involved in this incident and another 10 citizens were arrested. He added that the police have recently arrested a number of citizens who bought (bangog) seeds and seedlings, which is a type of narcotic. This quantity was bought from the Rafah Yam settlement at a token price with the aim of spreading corruption and vice in the Gaza Strip.

The police official said that a (bangog) farm was seized, and that this farm contains 40 trees belonging to the official in charge of the Hamas underground organ in the city of Dayr al-Balah.

Brig Gen. al-Jabali accused some Israeli security officials of cooperating with Hamas sides on these issues.

Al-Jabali stressed that mosques are places of worship rather than instigation.

Brig. Gen. al-Jabali met with dignitaries and village chiefs in the Gaza Strip, listened to their opinions, and briefed them on the violations of those who seek to foment sedition. The conferees stressed the need to abide by the laws of the National Authority.

'Arafat Adviser Denies Police To Be Trained in Israel

JN1605184595 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1730 GMT 16 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Marwan Kanafani, adviser to President Yasir 'Arafat, has denied reports from Israeli mass media that units of the Palestinian police would take part in a training course at the Israeli Regional Police College. The course is said to focus on how to breakup demonstrations.

Kanafani asserted that the Palestinian police force was established to serve the Palestinian people and protect their properties and for security against any aggression.

Brigadier General Ghazi al-Jabali, director general of the Palestinian police, also said that the Israeli radio report that units of the Palestinian police would participate in a training course in Israel was fabricated by the Israeli media to tarnish the image of the Palestinian police.

Israeli Citizenship Plans for Palestinians Criticized

JN1705085295 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0520 GMT 17 May 95

[Station commentary by Yusuf al-Qazzaz from the "New Day" feature]

[FBIS Translated Text] Jerusalem is our main preoccupation at the moment. It is the primary topic of concern at the Palestinian official and popular level. Jerusalem will remain an Arab, Islamic, and Christian preoccupation and concern.

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This is a well-established fact, just as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west. Another such fact is that Jerusalem is the capital of Palestine.

Yitzhaq Rabin can say daily, at every hour and minute, that Jerusalem is Israel's united and eternal capital. We are not responsible for what Rabin says about Jerusalem. Rabin and other Israeli leaders used to say: We will not negotiate with the PLO. But, when they discovered that the PLO and the Palestinian people were the same, they accepted the fact that the PLO exists and abandoned their illusion that the PLO does not exist. The same applies to the Israelis' relationship with Jerusalem. We know that they seized more Palestinian land in Jerusalem. We also know that they facilitate the naturalization of some weak-spirited Palestinians by giving them Israeli nationality. But we and the Israelis know that granting Israeli citizenship to the Galilee, Triangle, and Negev Arabs have further entrenched their Palestinian affiliation. As for those Jerusalemites who accepted the Israeli citizenship, they will realize that the Israeli society brims with racism, and that there are even Israelis who carry out racism against the Jews themselves. This being the case, how will it be with those who are naturalized, particularly if they are Palestinians? They will find someone to persuade them to give up this Israeli poison sooner or later. There are many ways of persuasion.

What is important is that the entire world has started to realize what Israel is carrying out against Jerusalem. The European Union rejected the confiscation of Palestinian land. Russia rejected the confiscation of the Jerusalem lands. The Islamic and Arab world act on the regional and international level to confront the Israeli decision. The Jerusalem issue will impose itself on the agenda of the Arab-Israeli negotiations.

Jerusalem has four dimensions: Palestinian, Arab, Islamic, and Christian. Jerusalem has a fifth dimension, the most important one. It represents the history of the Muslims, and the Christians. It also embodies the Palestinians spirit. The Israelis will not succeed in cancelling the history of the Muslims and the Christians who know by heart that Jerusalem is the place from where the Arab Prophet Muhammad, may God's peace and blessings be upon him, ascended to Heaven, and that it is the land of resurrection and where Christ, may God's blessings be upon him, was born even if the United States uses its veto at the UN Security Council to protect Israel's policy.

Since the dawn of history, Jerusalem has been and will continue to be Arab, Palestinian, and Muslim. Its occupation will end. Martyrs fell and many were wounded at its entrances, in its streets, and on its outskirts to protect its houses of worship and its Arab, Palestinian, and Islamic character.

Jerusalem will not be forgotten even for one moment. If Palestine is the essence of the conflict with the Israelis, Jerusalem is the essence of Palestine. There can be no peace without Jerusalem.

Al-Shaqaqi Says Autonomy Area Heading for 'Explosion'

NC1705212095 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 17 May 95

[Telephone interview with Islamic Jihad leader Fathi al-Shaqaqi by Jihad al-'Idan; place and date not given; from the "News and Reports" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-'Idan] Dr. Al-Shaqaqi, what are your views on holding an Arab minisummit to discuss the Zionist settlement policies in Jerusalem? Will such a minisummit succeed in achieving what the Arab foreign ministers failed to achieve during their meeting?

[Al-Shaqaqi] Although we do not expect such meetings and conferences to achieve anything important, we still see in them a positive sign, however feeble. Any meeting of Arabs and Muslims to discuss internal problems or to show concern for the causes of Palestine and Jerusalem is welcome. I do not expect anything important to emerge from the meeting, because of the current international circumstances and because most of the delegates, as you know, have some links with the major powers. Therefore we must not have very high hopes for such meetings, although, indeed, we do not reject them.

[Al-'Idan] Dr. al-Shaqaqi, the UN Security Council has not passed any resolutions worth mentioning on the Zionist expansionist drive in occupied Palestine. What is your comment on this situation? Which parties impede the passing of resolutions that are harmonious with ...

[Al-Shaqaqi, interrupting] First, this is a new demonstration that the UN Security Council is totally under U.S. control. We know that Europe—France, for instance—is interested in the Security Council meeting and in getting a resolution adopted. Many other countries do not oppose this. But the United States alone refuses any assault on Jewish or Zionist sentiments and has for the past few days been impeding any serious debate or meaningful resolution condemning the new Zionist aggression represented by the expropriation of land. This is a new demonstration that the United States is the Muslims' primary enemy.

[Al-'Idan] Dr. al-Shaqaqi, the campaign of arrests against your members in the occupied territories and the

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self-rule area has redoubled in the past few days. Could you please put us in the picture of what is happening?

[Al-Shaqaqi] First, the Zionist occupation knows the mujahidin's blows are the basic challenge to it at this stage. It is a stage marked by collapse in every sphere. The Zionist occupation is intensifying its efforts to pursue the mujahidin and arrest them, even without specific charges. For this reason we find that most of the detainees are not put on trial, but held in administrative detention, that is, imprisoned without trial. At the same time the Zionist occupation is putting constant pressure on the self-rule authority to implement a similar policy of exerting pressure on the mujahidin and arresting them. The aim is to restrict these strugglers' movements and prevent them from dealing blows, which, whenever they succeed, represent the greatest challenge to Zionist aggression.

[Al-'Idan] Dr. al-Shaqaqi, what are the latest domestic events in Palestine?

[Al-Shaqaqi] First, everything in the self-rule areas forebodes an explosion. The economic crisis is crushing. There is major corruption within the self-rule authority. There are plenty of arrests. Tension is increasing and an explosion is expected inside the self-rule areas at any moment. Confiscation of land in the West Bank continues, both in Jerusalem and the other areas. Arrests are continuing. The challenge to our people continues.

[Al-'Idan] Dr. al-Shaqaqi, secretary general of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, thank you very much.

[Al-Shaqaqi] Thanks to you. God be with you.

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Algeria

FIS' Kebir: Atmosphere 'Dangerous' for Elections

MM1705133395 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 17 May 95 p 6

[Report on interview with Shaykh Rabah Kebir, head of the Islamic Salvation Front Executive Committee, by Kamil al-Tawil in London "yesterday"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London — Shaykh Rabah Kebir, head of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] Executive Committee [abroad], warned yesterday against holding the presidential elections in the current atmosphere, saying that "it would be a dangerous adventure." In an interview with AL-HAYAH, the first since he abstained from making statements several months ago, Kebir doubted the truth of a statement bearing the Armed Islamic Group's [GIA] name and threatening him and another number of FIS officials. He said that the bulletin distributed outside Algeria "persisted in promoting deviant jurisprudence and distorted ideas."

His statements reflected clear moderation through his emphasis on the need to resolve the crisis, from which he said the Algerian people are "suffering greatly." He condemned several violent actions attributed to armed groups or security forces.

Asked about the truth of the threats issued in the GIA's name against the FIS and the reports of the imminent unification of armed groups in Algeria, Kebir, who lives in Germany, said: "Official media services in Algeria, or those loyal to them, have recently persisted in inflating rumors about infighting among mujahidin factions, imposing a blackout on the activities of the real political opposition and overlooking the murder operations carried out by the armed militias, living on the blood of the innocent. We have not heard until now that any of these have been legally prosecuted for the criminal operations carried out by them. As for the mujahidin's unity, it is an aim sought by the sincere. And there is always hope in God."

He went on to say that, as for the statement threatening some FIS leaders attributed to the GIA, he believes that it is a false statement circulated by schemers, especially as it was carried by the EL ANSAR bulletin, which has persisted in promoting deviant jurisprudence and distorted ideas, scorning Muslims' sanctities and honor, and insulting their ulema and prominent leaders. "Muslims must be cautious of the schemers lying in wait for them... we in the FIS reject and condemn any actions violating the Islamic Shari'ah or aimed at destroying Algeria — land and people — whether they are attributed to the Islamists or to their enemy. As far as we are concerned, it is a matter of principles that rise above individuals and organizations, whatever their names."

On the military situation in the country and the reports that the Army has achieved successes over the groups, and whether he believes that matters could be settled militarily in favor of one of the two sides, Kebir said that "reports that the authorities have made successes and achieved victories over the Islamists are in fact not conveying the true picture of what is happening on the scene. They are providing false information reflecting the writers' wishful thinking. However, what is certain is that the Algerian people are suffering greatly — which prompts the pooling of the efforts of those who are faithful to their religion and nation in order to stop the hemorrhage and look for a just radical solution that gives everyone his rights. Especially as no swift military solution is available to any party. And there are parties seeking by all means to hit and fragment Algeria and to starve the Algerian people with the aim of humiliating them."

Asked about reports indicating that FIS leader Shaykh Abassi Madani sent a letter to the Algerian presidency, he said: "We have no knowledge of Shaykh Madani's alleged letter to the presidency. Shaykh Madani is absent, and the source of the information (about the letter) is the organs of the current authorities."

Asked whether there was any specific information about Shaykhs Madani and Ali Belhadj, he said: "Our information indicates that Shaykh Abassi is in the suburbs of the capital. But we know nothing about his (health) condition. As for Shaykh Ali Belhadj, we know nothing about his condition or where he is being held. We believe that the authorities are keeping the two shaykhs out of the way deliberately, thus they are held responsible for that."

Asked whether he believes that the Rome document still represents a solution to the crisis, he said that the "national covenant" signed by the opposition parties in the Italian capital early in the year "is a historic turning point in the Algerian political opposition's work. It is an important achievement for it. It includes the basic foundations for resolving the crisis rocking Algeria, that is if there is a desire to resolve it. But the authorities continue to obstruct, procrastinate, evade, and maneuver, hence they are responsible for delaying a solution. The price for this delay is being paid in blood and suffering by the Algerian people."

On the possibility of holding a new seminar outside Algeria by the parties that participated in the two Rome seminars, he said: "Meetings are continuing among the parties to the 'national covenant document' in Algeria. They are attended by our brothers there (Shaykhs

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Ali Djeddi and Abdelkader Boukhamkham). This is in addition to some meetings held at bilateral level by the parties to the national covenant document whenever circumstances abroad permit. All these meetings are aimed at contributing to resolving the crisis and coordinating efforts among the influential political opposition parties seeking to spare blood."

On the presidential elections scheduled to be held at the end of the year, he said that "the insistence on holding them in the absence of serious negotiations is an adventure no less dangerous than the adventure of the coup against legitimacy on 11 January 1992" — a reference to the annulment of the first round of legislative elections, which was won by the FIS.

He added: "Presidential elections will not solve any problem or grant any legitimacy if they are held in such deteriorating security conditions, so be warned, people of understanding."

Asked about his position on the recent statements made by HAMAS [Islamic Society Movement] leader Shaykh Mahfoud Nahnah, in which he praised him (Kebir), he said: "Mahfoud Nahnah's hesitant political positions make it difficult for us to follow and respond to them."

Rejects 'Intimidation,' Rumors

MM1705110195 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 17 May 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by Salah Jamil: "Rabah Kebir Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Salvation Front Rejects Method of Intimidation To Change People's Political Convictions"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London — Shaykh Rabah Kebir, chairman of the Algerian [Islamic] Salvation Front [FIS] Executive Committee abroad, has emphasized the FIS' "rejection of the use of the method of intimidation toward others" as well as its rejection and condemnation of all acts "aimed at destroying Algeria... whether by the Islamists or their enemy."

In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT yesterday in reaction to the recent statement attributed to the Armed Islamic Group [GIA] giving him and other FIS leaders abroad — including Anouar Haddam, the head of its Parliamentary Mission, who lives in Washington — one month from 4 May, the date of that statement, to join its ranks, the FIS leader, who lives in Germany, said that "exaggerating the rumors about conflict between the mujahidin factions only serves their enemies." He stressed that "we in the FIS reject and condemn all actions which run contrary to the Islamic Shari'ah or seek to destroy Algeria — people and territory — whether by Islamists or their enemy."

Shaykh Rabah Kebir categorically rejected recourse to what he described as "the method of intimidation" to change political convictions. He affirmed that "belonging to movements or parties is something born out of conviction and related to certain principles and programs and cannot come by intimidation. Furthermore, use of the method of intimidation toward others reflects the base character and sense of despair and frustration of those who use that method." He pointed out that "that is the logic of the secret intelligence services operating in the dark like bats." He added: "As for me, I represent the FIS."

Asked if the fact that the statement attributed to the GIA appeared in the latest edition of EL ANSAR, described as close to the GIA, lends credibility to the "deadline" mentioned, the chairman of the FIS Executive Committee abroad said that "the appearance of the said statement in EL ANSAR bulletin is no evidence of its authenticity, quite the contrary." He attacked EL ANSAR bulletin and the attempts to promote "abnormal jurisprudence and deviant ideology, undermine Islamic sanctities and honor, and attack Muslim ulema and dignitaries."

Shaykh Kebir warned against "infiltrators." Asked what the FIS strategy would be if it transpired that the statement attributed to the GIA was genuine, Shaykh Kebir said: "We abide by the Shari'ah in all our affairs. We talk about something when it happens, or as the popular saying goes, 'one is identified by his actions.'" On his position in Germany, particularly after recent reports that the German security authorities were investigating arms smuggling to the armed groups in Algeria, he replied: "My position in Germany is normal, like anyone seeking asylum. I beseech God to grant me success in serving my religion and my nation."

RCD's Saadi: 'Time Has Come for Civil Resistance'

BR1505150295 Madrid EL PAIS in Spanish 15 May 95 p 11

[Report on interview with Said Saadi, leader of the Algerian Rally for Culture and Democracy, by Perran Sales in Algiers; date not given: "I Have Not Met Any Moderate Fundamentalists"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Algiers — "The time has come for civil resistance in Algeria," said Dr. Said Saadi, leader of the Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD) party, firmly. The RCD is considered to be one of the toughest opponents to any form of dialogue with fundamentalist organizations. With this call to popular mobilization, Dr. Saadi is trying to renew the call made to the civilian population almost a year go for them to

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take up arms and oppose fundamentalism. "I have not met any moderate fundamentalists," he asserted.

"We are suffering from the aggression of a sector of society that has decided to take power by force in a bloody and also unseeing way. We have no other choice but to resist. The time has come for civil resistance in Algeria. The people have the right to defend themselves legitimately, to protect themselves, their houses, their families, and their society."

Said Saadi, a 47-year-old psychiatrist originally from the village of Agribs in the Kabylia region, is a passionate man who repeats a radical rhetoric over and over again. This rhetoric has managed to penetrate and convince the weakest sectors of the population and those most directly threatened by the fundamentalist offensive in Algeria, including the fringe of women and intellectuals.

"When I first called for popular resistance in Algeria in March 1994, I caused a scandal. Time has proven me right. Most of the country is already involved in the antiterrorist struggle. Defense committees are being formed in various parts of the country: Kabylia, Lajdaria, Chefl, and Jihel."

A large proportion of the citizens mobilized by Dr. Saadi's call have been incorporated into a special corps called the Municipal Police, which numbers 16,000 members and 380 municipalities spread over 30 provinces. Its mission is legally protected by a single decree which gives them the right to monitor equipment related to health care and town planning, but in actual fact they operate on the ground as shock troops in collaboration with the security forces.

"There is no possibility of dialogue with the fundamentalists. I have not met any moderate fundamentalists. That is a Western invention. To my mind a moderate fundamentalist is someone who has not yet found a way to engage in violence. It is like you telling me there is such a thing as moderate fascists. Things must be clear in a democracy. As soon as someone claims to be the representative of a divine right and talks about the advent of an Islamic state, then that means that bloodshed is also on his agenda."

Said Saadi wonders who is behind the violence in Algeria, which has taken a toll of 40,000 victims in more than three years. His first conclusion points to political fundamentalism, but he also accuses — and holds responsible for the violence — those political parties which in recent months have converted, in his opinion, into the "handmaidens of armed fundamentalism." "The origin of this culture of aggression must be sought in the former single party, the National Liberation Front, which exercised the political pedagogy of violence for decades. The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) is the natural offspring of the regime which single-handedly governed Algeria."

Prime Minister Outlines Main Economic Issues

LD1705132995 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 16 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Major economic issues that are prevailing on the national economic scene were the focus of an interview that Prime Minister Mokdad Sifi gave to the daily LIBERTE. Correspondent Abdelkarim Adis:

[Adis] In an exclusive interview to the daily LIBERTE Sifi spoke about a tangible thrust in the production sectors and pointed out that the main imported goods are basically directed toward the production of public and private economic units.

In the field of investment the prime minister counted 3,600 investment programs, 1,000 of them are related to the cultivation of food stuffs and manufacturing industries, which have benefited from the assistance of the investment promotion and support agency APSI.

These 1,000 investment programs were estimated by the prime minister to the value of 10 billion dinar in addition to $250 trillion obtained from special funds within the framework of partnerships with foreigners.

Investment issues, the prime minister said, will be the subject of discussion during the national conference on investment, which will be organized by the [APSI] agency. Sifi also said that the government will take further steps to facilitate a sound transformation to a market economy, alluding in this respect to the opening of competitive opportunities.

Sifi also urged all economic partners to agree on holding a meeting where the national economic objectives will be balanced, taking into consideration the views of every partner.

Regarding the question of debts, the prime minister said Algeria is about to control or at least to reduce the volume of debts to 68 percent during 1995 compared to 71 percent during 1994 of the gross national product.

First Installment of EU Loan Received

LD1505140195 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 15 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Following the signing of an agreement between Algeria and the European Union [EU] on granting Algeria a loan of about 200 million ECU, equivalent to 260 million dollars, it was announced in Brussels today that the first installment of

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the loan — about 100 million ECU — has been released.

It is worth noting that the agreement between Algeria and the EU was endorsed by the European Council of Ministers at the end of last year.

Niger Foreign Minister Signs Cooperation Agreement

LD1705141995 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 16 May 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Today at El Mithak residence, a protocol agreement has crowned the series of Algerian-Niger talks. This protocol agreement, signed by the foreign affairs ministers of the two countries, included cooperation in the security sphere and in the economic and social spheres. Here are the details from Adel Sadun:

[Sadun] Foreign Affairs Minister Mohamed Salah Dembri signed the agreement for the Algerian side and Niger Foreign Minister Mohamed Bazoum signed for the Niger side in the presence of Prime Minister Mokdad Sifi and Niger's Prime Minister Hama Amadou, alongside a number of ministers from the two countries.

The clauses of the agreement stipulated giving a new push to bilateral cooperation relations between the two countries in the security, economic, and social spheres in the two countries' border areas, whereby numerous measures and decisions have been adopted to strengthen the comprehensive development march in the border areas:

[Begin recording] [Mohamed Bazoum, in Arabic] We have discussed cooperation affairs between Niger and Algeria, dealt with the ways of coordinating them as between two peoples, and have agreed on that. God willing, we shall come here to Algeria next September on the occasion of the meeting of the joint committee between us and Algeria. We have a varied program and have discussed what we can do in the future, and have reached understanding on this. God willing, everything will progress in an excellent manner.

[Dembri] We have carried out a comprehensive assessment of bilateral cooperation. As my brother Mohamed Bazoum has pointed out, there are different spheres of cooperation, training cadres, and trade exchanges. There are numerous potentials in the economic sphere, which we have identified and proposed an approach in anticipation of the meeting of the mixed committee which, God willing, will convene next September. But we have taken decisions, particularly in the spheres of trade, training, economic cooperation, and finance. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Egypt

Cairo Radio Reports U.S. Veto of Land Resolution

NC1805055095 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0400 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Early this morning, the United States used the veto for the first time in five years to block a resolution by the Security Council calling on Israel to reverse its expropriation of the Palestinian land in Jerusalem. Reports coming from the United Nations indicate that the 14 other members of the Security Council backed the draft resolution on this matter presented by Oman, Indonesia, Botswana, Rwanda, Nigeria, and Honduras, but the U.S. veto blocked it.

Madeleine Albright, U.S. delegate to the United Nations, justified her country's position on the matter by saying that the Security Council is not the appropriate place for discussing the Jerusalem issue. She added that direct talks among the parties concerned are the only way to attain an overall peace in the Middle East. However, the majority of the other countries who have taken part in the Security Council debate on Jerusalem stressed that Israel's seizure of Arab land in occupied Jerusalem is a flagrant act of defiance of UN resolutions, which demand that Israel not change the status of Jerusalem, as well as a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Musa Says Peace Process Needs 'Urgent Rescue'

NC1805082695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0600 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 18 May (MENA) — Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has warned that the deterioration in the Middle East peace process, because of Israel's intransigence over the Jerusalem problem and its monopoly of nuclear weapons, has reached such an extent that it needs an urgent rescue operation.

In an interview with AL-AHRAM published today, Thursday, Musa pointed out that Israel's insistence on monopolizing the possession of nuclear weapons only 20 km away from the Egyptian border is a threat to Egypt's national and Pan-Arab security and is something that we will not accept. He added: We have wasted several opportunities in the past on this matter, but we will not do so from now on. This is because we are living in a dangerous area that is in jeopardy now more than at any time before, thanks to Israel's exclusive possession of a nuclear arsenal, he added.

Musa stressed that there is a need for Egypt to strongly develop its peaceful nuclear program and to benefit from

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the advantages provided for under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT] in this regard to promote development and scientific advancement.

Commenting on what happened at the international conference in New York to renew the NPT, the foreign minister explained that Egypt scored several positive points at the conference. He noted that Egypt held tight to its firm position rejecting an indefinite extension of the treaty despite all the pressure, and the Arab states voiced solidarity with Egypt and rejected an indefinite extension of the treaty.

Musa regretted the U.S. bias toward Israel and stressed that an impartial U.S. role taking the interests of all Middle Eastern parties into consideration is needed. He emphasized that Israel's refusal to join the NPT and its insistence on keeping its nuclear arsenal beyond international control threaten to open the door to a nuclear race in the Middle East. To avert this, Egypt insists on looking for a way to handle and prevent the Israeli nuclear program as a prelude for emptying the region of all weapons of mass destruction, in accordance with President Husni Mubarak's 1990 initiative to free the Middle East from weapons of mass destruction, he added.

Musa stressed that the international conference on the NPT had been part of a bigger process and that Egypt's goal is to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East and place the Israeli nuclear program under international supervision so that we can discuss issues related to regional security on an equal, balanced, and just basis. Musa explained that Egypt had affirmed from the start that because of Israel's nuclear program, it would not accept an indefinite extension of the NPT. Egypt's firm stance is that either Israel joins the treaty and adopts a measure that helps put things on the right track toward an overall political settlement, or we will not accept an indefinite extension and there will not be a consensus among the countries on such an extension, as demanded by the nuclear states. Musa noted that the decision to extend the NPT indefinitely had been presented by more than 100 countries, but Egypt did not join them and stayed away. We explained that such a decision would be made by a majority vote and not by consensus, as the nuclear states demanded, and this is clearly indicated in the decision. He pointed out that a majority decision means that there are countries that do not approve of an unconditional and indefinite extension, and these countries number more than 70. In this regard, a positive and collective Arab stance was crystallized and all the Arab states declared that they would not back the decision.

Musa warned that failure to make progress on the issue of Israel's nuclear program will obstruct progress in regional cooperation and will, in addition to the Jerusalem issue, cast a dark shadow on the peace process. He stressed that the Israeli nuclear program's problem is not over, as some people imagine, now that the NPT's New York conference has been convened. With this conference a long process has started, he added, noting that Egyptian diplomacy will continue to raise this issue at all forums until this program is placed under international supervision.

The foreign minister praised the Arab coordination that has been demonstrated strongly and positively in the issue of Israel's nuclear program and the question of Israel's seizure of Arab land in East Jerusalem.

Writer Mocks 'Weak' U.S. Stance on NPT, Jerusalem

NC1805104495 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 14 May 95 pp 1, 3

[Article by Jalal Duwaydar: "Waiting for Thanks From Washington"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli Prime Minister Rabin sent a cable of thanks to the Clinton administration for not placing Israel on the list of countries required to join the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT].

These are thanks to Washington's response to the request world Zionism made to put pressure on the NPT conference not to mention Israel. World Zionism also insisted on making the decision absolute without specifying any names to secure and protect Israel from submitting to international legitimacy.

Israel's thanks to the weak U.S. stance, which does not go along with the behavior of a civilized superpower or the only superpower in the world, is not normal. I was expecting the U.S. Administration to send a thank-you letter to Rabin and his government for this grand honor accorded it for allowing it to accomplish this stance that supports and backs the Israeli aggression against international legitimacy and stability and security in the Middle East. On the basis of this, I consider Rabin's letter of thanks to reflect generosity and compassion on his part which must have been received with great welcome and flooded Washington with excessive joy that cannot be described.

It is not strange for joy to grip Israel and all the Zionist organizations for the great victory that they realized through the U.S. influence on international legitimacy and on moral values and principles.

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What has happened is not at all a contribution from the United States, the full partner in the Middle East peace process, but a deep stab to peace.

We cannot argue the fact that Washington's sitting back incapable of doing anything, watching events, surrendering, declaring before the whole world without any shame its submission to Zionism is something we cannot accept from the sole superpower. In addition, it is evidence of the non-credibility of U.S. justice.

It is the right of Madeleine Albright, U.S. envoy to the United Nations, who, incidentally, reminds me of Mrs. Golda Me'ir, former Israeli prime minister, to be happy for this victory scored by international legitimacy. I am confident she would have ululated for joy had she been able to do so in the hall of the NPT conference after U.S. efforts succeeded in protecting Israel against the unleashed anger of international legitimacy whose principles and values have been violated and degraded, thanks to U.S. intervention.

Truly, Egyptian diplomacy under the leadership of President Mubarak has waged an honorable battle to uncover the attack on peace and stability in the Middle East with great honesty, force, and courage. This attack comes in the form of excluding Israel from joining the NPT. From beginning to end, Egypt has affirmed, through its reservations over the indefinite extension of the NPT, its firm stance which does not yield before justice. It has rejected every attempt to accept the use of double standards since that is considered to be against justice and fairness between interests. These are basic things that must prevail throughout the world.

What Egypt has done is crystal clear. The Arab and Islamic worlds, along with the absent world conscience, still must perform a more serious role in confronting the dangers they are being subjected to.

Egypt managed to extract from the NPT conference, with the support and help of a group of Arab and non-aligned countries, two decisions to remove all weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East and submit all nuclear installations to inspection. These two resolutions represent a success for Egyptian diplomacy despite Washington's insistence on not including Israel's name in the second decision.

Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa declared that this achievement is a step down the road, not a victory to Egyptian diplomacy, as it was described by our correspondent in New York citing UN circles. Therefore, I am asking for more coordination and Arab and Islamic cooperation to confront the U.S. stance which supports and backs the continuous Israeli aggression.

Our friendship with Washington and its continued use of double standards in favor of Israel cannot be separated, particularly since one feels the bitterness more when the act of injustice comes from friends. It is unfortunate for this friendship linking Arabs and Muslims with the United States, which has strategic interests with the Arabs that are highly important for the U.S. people, that another serious issue has arisen that affects the Arab and Islamic religious rights and beliefs; namely, the Jerusalem issue.

All signs indicate that a new game is being played along the Washington-Tel Aviv line, the goal of which is to settle the question of Jerusalem in favor of Israeli aggression. Proof of this is that the draft resolution submitted to the Security Council, at the initiative of the United Arab Emirates and with help from Egypt, to denounce Israel's seizure of the Palestinian land in Jerusalem faces the strongest opposition from the United States, a country that is supposed to be a sponsor of principles, legitimacy, values, and peace in the world and the Middle East. The U.S. Administration's departments have not shied away from announcing impudently and in disregard of the feelings of Arabs and Muslims that they will stand against even the denunciation of the Israeli measures.

To contain the Arab and Muslim wrath and indignation, Washington arranged a deal within the Security Council under which the Security Council's presidency would issue a statement against the Israeli measures, instead of a strong resolution condemning Israel and calling for a halt to land expropriation. How in God's name could this happen and square with the ethics and principles of freedom and justice on which the United States was established? Unfortunately, the U.S. Congressional leaders hasten to flatter Israel by competing to get its embassy moved from Tel Aviv to Arab and Islamic Jerusalem. This would empty the Palestinian-Israeli peace agreement of any substance, particularly since this agreement states that a solution for the problem of this holy city needs to be found through negotiations.

The conspiracy that is being plotted in the Middle East cannot be done in a way that runs counter to justice and comprehensive peace. Let the honorable conspirators remember President Mubarak's warnings, which truly reflect a genuine expression about the danger of such irresponsible practices and the tremendous storm that could result from such practices. Such a storm could blow away everything, including the interests of those involved in them.

Damned are the inter-Arab fragmentation and rifts, the product of the conspiracy of one Arab against his fellow Arab, which are the cause of the capitulation and loss.

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Thank you Saddam for what you have done to the Arab nation. Thanks to your aggression against Kuwait, you have contributed to creating excuses and justification for the aggression against the Arab rights and existence!!

O Arabs; O Muslims: Prove to the world the falsehood of the tragic reality, which Israel's friends and allies are betting on; namely, that you are helpless, that your loud voice will soon not be heard, and that you will give up and forget the insult, which is close to utter ruin, acting on the proverb that says let bygones be bygones.

Arabs Said Bogged Down in U.S.-Israeli 'Quagmire'

NC1805103095 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 13 May 95 p 8

[From the "Close-Up" column by Salamah Ahmad Salamah: "In the Peace Quagmire"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The issue of Jerusalem has become one of one-upmanship in the U.S. presidential elections, talk of which began prematurely. Senator Robert Dole, leader of the Republican majority, who intends to run for election against Clinton, volunteered by announcing a bill to transfer the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and to consider unified Jerusalem as the eternal capital of Israel. Newt Gingrich, speaker of the House of Representatives, made a similar declaration hard on its heels, thus placing the U.S. Administration in the worst possible situation, never mind the deliberate sabotage of the peace process in the Middle East.

No one knows for sure whether the U.S. Congress works for Israel or the United States. But it is certain that the passing of the legislation the Republicans will submit, despite the will of the U.S. Government, means that President Clinton's administration is no longer responsible for steering U.S. policy and that the constitutional coup, which everyone spoke of when the Republicans won the majority in the Senate and the House of Representatives, has eliminated the powers of President Clinton's administration, which has become a "lame duck" unable to make decisions 18 months before its term expires. This does not mean the Clinton government is less supportive than the Republicans of the proposal to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem. This, after all, was one of Clinton's promises during his election campaign. The Clinton administration opted for delaying a decision until the talks on the fate of Jerusalem begin so as not to affect the peace process. The Republican candidate Senator Dole "rushed" cheaply to score a point in his favor with the Jews. Rabin, with great cunning not lacking in contempt, pretended to distance himself when he said it was "a domestic affair" and that he preferred to keep out of it. This means that the race between the Democrats and the Republicans to serve the Israeli State is taken for granted and that Rabin need not interfere.

The situation is this: According to the United States and Israel, the Arabs have no choice but to accept the status quo. Most issues have decisively been settled in favor of Israel, there is no use in negotiating over them, the peace process has stopped where it is, there is no hope of establishing a genuine self-rule for the Palestinians to pave the way for a final settlement, there is no hope in discussing Jerusalem, because it has become Israel's eternal capital, and there is no sign indicating Israel's readiness to withdraw from the Golan Heights. So the Arabs must ask themselves how they can emerge from the quagmire of the Israeli-U.S. peace in which they are bogged down. This problem, in my view, is more important than the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Daily Questions Israeli Desire for Peace

NC1805080295 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0612 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Transliterated Text] Cairo, 18 May (MENA) — The newspaper AL-AHRAM has stressed that all signs show that Israel is not serious about the peace process and is only interested in imposing solutions that can only be described as "tailored" to the Israeli size and ignores all Arab rights and international norms and laws. In an editorial today, the paper notes Israel's decision to expropriate and seize Arab land in East Jerusalem on the claim that Jerusalem is the soul of the Jews and the eternal capital of the Hebrew State and is not negotiable. Israel ignores the fact that the Oslo Agreement stipulates that the negotiations over Jerusalem will take place in the final stage of implementing the Palestinian self-rule.

AL-AHRAM stresses that the chance for peace now may not happen again. Israel may find itself in a very regretful position if this chance is missed, particularly since Egypt, which is the key to peace and war in the region, and fraternal Syria, are ready to accept Israel as a member of the Middle East family.

'Strong Arab Position' on Jerusalem Issue Praised

NC1705112595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0602 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 17 May (MENA) — The newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH stated that the Security Council's heated debate over the Israeli Government's decision to expropriate land in Arab Jerusalem demonstrates the great importance of the united Arab position on this pivotal issue.

The newspaper commented today that strong Arab coordination and solidarity will effectively confront the

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dangers surrounding the Arab nation. The paper noted Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa's statement that confronting Israeli actions in Jerusalem requires speedy negotiations. It also requires coordination among the various Arab sides and the need to think about national interests, away from insignificant and marginal conflicts.

The newspaper added that, possibly, the strong Arab position on developments in Jerusalem will begin effective restoration of Arab solidarity and the bolstering of the Arab positions in the march for peace, with all necessary force. The paper pointed out that Arab public opinion, along with the supporters of peace, are waiting to see what current efforts will come up with to initiate an Arab summit on Jerusalem.

AL-JUMHURIYAH said that the proposed Arab summit highlights the great importance of the Jerusalem issue and the need to confront what will happen to the holy city as a result of the Israeli plan to eliminate its Arab identity. The paper stressed that this summit might open the door to Arab reconciliation after a huge hole in the wall of Arab solidarity and unity occurred as a result of the Gulf war.

Commentary Decries U.S. 'Blind Bias' Toward Israel

NC1705160395 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 17 May 95

[Commentary by 'Atif 'Umar: "Will Arab Roles Be Corrected Toward the Correct Goal?"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] It is unlikely that the UN Security Council will issue a resolution condemning Israel for seizing some hectares of Palestinian land in east Jerusalem. This is in view of the U.S. Administration's clear, frank, and declared bias. After meeting President Mubarak in Cairo, the U.S. ambassador to the UN, Madeleine Albright, frankly declared that the Security Council is not the venue to settle such issues, indicating that they can be discussed between the two disputing parties, namely, the Israelis and Palestinians. If we consider the huge gap between Israel, which has an Army equipped with the most up-to-date Western weapons, including nuclear bombs, missile launchers, and missiles that can reach the farthest point in the Middle East and the whole Arab world, and the unarmed Palestinian people, who are still fighting with stones sometimes and with sharp statements other times, we see that the U.S. representative wants to say that everything is over and the Palestinians have no alternative but to accept the fait accompli or accept material compensation; otherwise, the land will be lost and any compensation will be lost.

The statements may be bitter and harsh but they express the truth — what is being hatched against the Palestinian people and any Arab state that hesitates to meet Israel's illogical demands. So we affirm the need for the Arab states to change their strategies toward the new developments in the Middle East. Israel acts in accordance with a plan implemented by both the Labor and Likud parties, a plan with a firm policy that defines the objectives and requirements of each phase and that usually relies on endless Arab differences. Events have proved that foreign forces are behind these differences. [passage omitted]

Despite the U.S. Administration's pressure on the Arabs as part of the U.S. race to win Jewish votes, and despite the Israeli Government's increasing arrogance against Palestinian citizens in the occupied territories, we say that all these practices will double the insistence on the need to correct the Arab strategies toward the correct goal.

Perhaps the arrangements being made now to convene a minisummit in an Arab capital are an inevitable step toward stating the unity of the Arab stance on the most important issue preoccupying the Arabs and Muslims, especially in light of reports that the United States will veto any Security Council resolution condemning Israel. If, in the past few years, Egypt has intensified its efforts to purify the world's conscience, especially the U.S. conscience, of blind bias toward Israel, out of Egypt's concern for a just peace and an acceptable stability in the region, it will have various options to attain the goal of saving the region from the vicissitudes of conflicts, the negative consequences of which affect all the peoples of the region regardless of race or religion.

AAPSO Statement on NPT, U.S. 'Bias' Toward Israel

NC1705154095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1425 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 17 May (MENA) — The Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Committee [AAPSO] has declared that it does not consider the resolution passed by the New York conference on the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT], extending the treaty indefinitely, as an end of the struggle to remedy the treaty's shortcomings and its unfairness to nonnuclear countries.

In a statement today AAPSO said the resolution marks the beginning of a new arduous stage of struggle that requires preparation and mobilization with the aim of giving a global character to the NPT, exempting no country from it, and eliminating all weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical, and biological. It said

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this must be done to offer real protection to nonnuclear countries from those that possess nuclear weapons and to extend technological assistance to them in the use of nuclear power for peaceful purposes.

The committee remarked that the obvious U.S. backing for Israel's refusal to join the NPT demonstrates the total U.S. bias toward Israel in the Middle East peace process, whereby Israel is seeking to dictate its own peace to the region under the threat of its nuclear arsenal and U.S. pressure.

Gingrich, Dole, Rabin Criticized for Positions

NC1705112995 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 11 May 95 p 4

[Article from the "Foreign Policy" column by Muhammad 'Abdallah: "Against the Weak"]

[FBIS Transliterated Text] The hopefuls seeking victory in the elections have agreed against the weak. The hopefuls are Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin; Newt Gingrich, speaker of the House of Representatives; and Senator Robert Dole, the majority leader in the U.S. Senate. The weak are the Arabs and Muslims. The first hopeful covets two things at the same time: first, Jerusalem, with its east and west, north and south as well as the Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese territories and, second, to stay in power after the elections that will be held in Israel next year. He wants to win the votes of the peace supporters, being, it is said, a man of peace, and the votes of those who want to hold onto the land, when he behaves as the extremists in the Likud bloc do.

The second hopeful is Newt Gingrich, who covets victory in the U.S. presidential elections with the votes and support of the American Jews. That is why he declared that he will submit a bill to the House of Representatives, which he chairs, recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and calling for the transfer of the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

Since the third hopeful Bob Dole covets the same thing — the votes and support of the Jews — he hastened to submit a bill to the Senate to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem. He even drew up a timetable setting a deadline in 1999, as if he wanted to tell the Jews that he was far ahead of his colleague in the Republican Party. The Republican Party does not currently occupy the White House, as Democratic President Clinton is holding this post.

Because the U.S. Republican Party game is known, Rabin, who is visiting the United States, declined to comment and was content to say — while inwardly extremely happy — that he does not comment on U.S. domestic affairs. There is another reason for his declining to comment and to welcome the U.S. favorable measures lavished on Israel: President Clinton, who also aspires to another term on office, is known as the U.S. President who has so far been the most supportive of Israel.

It seems the race will be long among the hopefuls against the weak. A few hours before Dole declared that he would submit his bill to the Senate, Gingrich, the number three man in the United States after the President and the vice president, said painfully at the meeting of the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee, one of the Jewish lobbies: We know that Israel stands on the confrontation line with Islamic terrorism backed by Iran. He also poured abuse on Syria. He said that the United States should not put the slightest pressure on Israel if Syria continued to reject the existing chance of peace. He meant that Damascus should accept peace according to the Israeli conditions.

It is sad that the weakness of Arabs and Muslims should be the primary issue in the auction of the U.S. elections. It is sad that the Arabs and Muslims should be auctioned long before the elections are held in this region and in the United States.

Columnist Criticizes U.S. 'Economic War' on Iran

NC1705174695 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 11 May 95 p 2

[From the Nu'man Jum'ah column: "Pulses"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Donning a white "cap," U.S. President Clinton attended the world Jewish congress, where he announced an economic war against Iran. This decision was Clinton's gift to the Zionist delegates who hatch plots in Israel's interest. The U.S. President ignored that he was attending a celebration of murderers, thieves, and aggressors against a whole region. All the Zionists are butchers and terrorists. Hawks and doves alike, their hands are stained with Arab blood.

Since the beginning of this century, Zionist gangs have been planning and carrying out massacres. The massacres and acts of repression have not stopped. Israel lives with the mentality of an outlaw state. It builds settlements and houses the foundlings of the world in them. It arms these foundlings and releases them to commit every imaginable and unimaginable crime.

The gangster state seizes Arab land in Jerusalem and elsewhere. It kills, tortures, and arrests anyone who stands in its way.

Conspiring with the Westerners in Europe and the United States, Israel has massed a huge arsenal of conventional weapons. It also possesses 300 nuclear

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warheads, including 60 warheads that are "tactical" and that can be used for controlled explosions without the dust reaching neighboring areas.

Unashamedly, the United States says Iran is trying to produce nuclear weapons, something that threatens peace in the Middle East and elsewhere. The United States knows Iran is trying to obtain nuclear reactors that are only good for peaceful purposes. Even if Iran thinks of using the reactors for military purposes, it has a long march before it can produce even a primitive nuclear bomb or warhead. Such production is next to nothing compared with Israel's production and advanced nuclear program.

The United States lies when it says Iran supports international terrorism. This is a false and unacceptable claim that lacks any evidence. Iran's involvement in any terrorist incident has not been proved, unless, that is, the United States repeats Israel's claims that the Resistance operations in south Lebanon are terrorist acts. Iran supports Hizballah, which is leading the Lebanese resistance against the Israeli occupation. Iran is the only state that continues to condemn the Zionist entity.

Fair plays requires the United States to compare the behavior of the Zionists with the behavior of the other states of the region. Israel is occupying the Golan, south Lebanon, and Palestine. Israel is stealing the water of the region and carrying out genocide against the Palestinians and the residents of south Lebanon.

Is it fair for the United States to ignore all of Israel's crimes and then arbitrarily denounce Hamas' resistance in the occupied territories and Hizballah's resistance in south Lebanon? The United States then declares an economic war on Iran because it supports Hizballah in south Lebanon. All this is for the sake of its adulteress foster daughter who is desecrating the whole Middle East.

And now we ask the Egyptian leadership and the Egyptian Foreign Ministry: Does the situation not warrant a strong Egyptian drive rejecting the war and blockade imposed on the Muslim people of Iran? Iran is a Muslim state and has its weight and status. It is a shield, bulwark, and our strategic depth. We must improve relations with it. Whether or not relations improve, Egypt must reject any aggression or infringement on fraternal Iran.

I believe Uncle Sam's plan is clear and is no longer secret to anyone. The United States seeks to weaken all the states of the region, except the be-all and end-all Israel. Uncle Sam fabricated the Iran-Iraq war. He then pushed things toward the occupation of Kuwait, the Gulf war, and the destruction of Iraq. Iran's turn has come.

Indifference is tantamount to complicity in crime. The accomplice will eventually drink from the same cup.

Columnist Assails Clinton Demand for Iran Boycott

NC1705163095 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 10 May 95 p 12

[From the "Our Foreign Policy" column by Muhammad Sayyid Ahmad: "A Modernized Version of Bipolarization"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bill Clinton's announcement (from a platform that was certainly significant, namely, a World Jewish Council dinner banquet) that the time has come to focus on Iran as the source of "international terrorism" and its center was an extremely serious declaration that could have the direst consequences.

We are about to enter a new world, which former U.S. President George Bush described as going beyond "bipolarization" following the Soviet Union's collapse. The current U.S. President is now talking again about "bipolarization" in which the enemy is not "Communism," but an international bloc led by Iran and stamped with the word "terrorism."

The Clinton administration has been leaning toward the notion that the pursuit of "terrorism" is a horse the United States must mount. When he visited the Middle East last October he emphasized the notion that peace is about to be established. He said it had found its embodiment in the Oslo agreement Israel concluded with the Palestinians, which was followed by a peace treaty with Jordan. He said that talk that peace has not been established was ambiguous and suspicious and said the aim of such talk was to impede the opportunities and encourage terrorism.

The belief prevailed for a time that talk of ambiguous stances pointed to Yasir 'Arafat for failing to take a decisive position against the terrorism of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. But Cairo felt the finger was being pointed at it too on the pretext that its attitude toward "al-Qadhdhafi" was also ambiguous. This U.S. logic peaks with the accusation that Iran is more responsible than anyone for "international terrorism" and that all countries must follow Washington's example and boycott it economically and put an end to commercial dealings with it.

By this behavior the U.S. Administration is merely fabricating a crisis, possibly with the aim of covering up difficulties it is facing internally after the Republican

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Party's right wing won a majority in Congress. Major U.S. newspapers noted that Clinton launched his campaign against Iran to contain the maneuvers of the right wing Republicans controlling Congress, especially those of Alfonse D'Amato, the highly influential congressman from New York (where the leaders of the U.S. Jewish community are), who recently demanded a boycott of all those who do not boycott Iran, even if this involved the most imported U.S. allies such as Germany, Japan, and France, which are eager to protect the interests of their companies dealing with Iran.

We are facing a fabricated international polarization for reasons that have nothing to do with Iran in the first place. The issue is ultimately a test of Washington's ability to impose this fabricated polarization. Can it really isolate Iran or its leaders internationally?

The Western capitals were not enthusiastic. Even Britain, which takes a strident view of countries accused of harboring terrorism, recently felt that the Clinton administration's sympathy for the Irish Republican Army leaders (for reasons connected to internal U.S. policy) contradicts Washington's escalation of its stance on Iran.

There is also Russia, which had already concluded a deal with Iran to supply it with nuclear reactors for peaceful purposes. Moscow says this deal is legitimate and complies with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty's clauses and respects the same rules that governed the U.S. deal with North Korea. Thus there is no need for double standards and for the United States to have the right to deal with Korea as it likes while Russia is not allowed to follow the same policy toward Iran. The crisis has reached a degree that threatens today's summit between Clinton and Yeltsin.

The U.S. envoy to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, came to the Middle East in an attempt to gain supporters for the U.S. position and to test her ability to gain supporters in this arbitrary battle. But she was disappointed by the results and she found no ear from anyone in the region but Israel.

The whole issue is weak. But it is grave. It reveals the new outlines of the "new world order." It is no secret that the end of the confrontation between East and West was not the end of "bipolarization" and that it continues in the form of a confrontation between North and South. Briefly, every confrontation is between the rich and the poor. They differ from those of the class struggle. But the dangerous thing is that the United States has started to act arbitrarily in fabricating international polarization and in deepening confrontation as the basis for its global leadership. The North is led by the United States, which accuses the South of being sympathetic to terrorism. Such arbitrariness will not help overcome double standards; it will only make them worse.

Mubarak Reviews Relations With UAE Justice Minister

NC1705135295 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] This morning President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received Dr. 'Abdallah Bin-'Imran, minister of justice of the United Arab Emirates [UAE], at the presidential headquarters. The meeting was attended by Justice Minister Counselor Faruq Sayf-al-Nasr and the UAE ambassador in Cairo.

The UAE minister of justice said he conveyed to President Mubarak the greetings and appreciation of UAE President Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan. He said his meeting with President Mubarak was good, reflecting the relations between Egypt and the UAE and the distinguished relationship between President Mubarak and His Highness Shaykh Zayid. Counselor Faruq Sayf-al-Nasr said the meeting between President Mubarak and the UAE justice minister showed the excellent bilateral and leadership ties within the framework of the strong relations between the two judicial families.

Musa Meets UN's Glaspie, Discusses Relief

NC1605184295 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 16 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met today with Ambassador April Glaspie, coordinator of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency [UNRWA], who is visiting Cairo.

At the meeting, the foreign minister underlined the need to curb the Palestinian people's suffering and provide all medical and social care services, particularly at this critical stage when the Palestinian people are suffering for Israel's oppressive measures.

The foreign minister voiced support for UNRWA's efforts to help the Palestinians.

Ambassador Glaspie said that she and Minister Musa discussed UNRWA activity to help the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

Musa Meets European Troika Group on Cooperation

NC1605184195 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1705 GMT 16 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 16 May (MENA) — This evening, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa began a meeting

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with the European troika delegation, which arrived in Cairo this afternoon.

The talks deal with ways to support cooperation between the Mediterranean and the European countries.

Musa will also explain Egypt's efforts to advance the peace process and establish a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

Earlier today, Ambassador Ra'uf Ghunaym, assistant to the foreign minister, held talks with the troika delegation.

He said the talks dealt with ways to boost relations between Egypt and Europe in light of the report prepared by the relevant Egyptian ministries and organizations.

He said the talks also dealt with all subjects related to the Barcelona conference, which will be attended by the foreign ministers of the European Union and the Mediterranean countries to discuss future relations between the two regions.

He said he stressed Egypt's firm position on the need to establish strong ties between the two regions and the need for cooperation between them including all political, economic, trade, and cultural areas as well as human development and environmental protection.

Ambassador Ghunaym stressed to the delegation the importance of achieving security, peace, and stability in the Middle East, as this is linked to security and peace in Europe.

Officials, UN Team Discuss Israeli 'Practices'

NC1605174795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1510 GMT 16 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 16 May (MENA) — Ambassador Jamal Bayyumi, head of the Israeli Affairs Department at the Foreign Ministry, met today with the visiting members of the international commission investigating the Israeli practices in the occupied territories.

Ambassador Bayyumi said that they reviewed the Israeli policy in the economic, security, and political fields toward the Palestinian National Authority and the Palestinian citizens.

He affirmed during the meeting that these policies do not serve the peace process and represent a deliberate violation of the Palestinian people's rights.

The commission met earlier with Ambassador Na'ilah Jabr, head of the Human Rights Department at the Foreign Ministry, who said that she explained the Egyptian position on the continuing Israeli violation of human rights in the occupied Arab territories. Ambassador Na'ilah affirmed that Israel's decision to expropriate Palestinian lands in Jerusalem is a violation of international resolutions that negatively affects the peace process. She pointed out that these Israeli practices were registered in the UN reports.

The commission will leave Cairo for Amman tomorrow to complete investigation into the Israeli violations of human rights.

Sudan

Opposition Leader Hopes for 'Bloodless Salvation'

MM1105154995 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 11 May 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by 'Uthman Mirghani: "Al-Mahdi Attacks al-Turabi's Congress, Describes It as 'Cluster of Contradictions'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London — Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, former Sudanese prime minister and leader of the opposition Ummah Party, yesterday vehemently attacked current conditions in Sudan, expressing his hope for a "bloodless salvation."

Al-Mahdi also attacked the Arab Islamic People's Congress [AIPC], headed by Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, secretary general of the National Islamic Front, describing it as a "cluster" of contradictions. He said that the AIPC's recent session, held in response to a call from al-Turabi, "did not serve the cause of Islam in Sudan or in the world."

In the 'Id-al-Adha sermon, which he delivered yesterday in the Wadnubawi Mosque in Omdurman, al-Mahdi broached current economic conditions in Sudan and the deterioration of the national currency's value, saying that the Sudanese pound's value equals one millieme [one-thousandth of pound] compared with its value in the democracy era. He added that the "Salvation [Revolution]" is worth one democracy [reference to his era] millieme. He also said that as a result of current living conditions, the majority of the Sudanese people are — according to the shari'ah — exempt from offering dahiyah [slaughter animal].

Huge numbers of citizens, estimated at more than 500,000, performed 'Id prayers with al-Mahdi. No confrontations or security problems took place despite the security men's confiscation of some video tapes on which the prayers were recorded. Security authorities also arrested al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's secretary, Bakri 'Abd-al-Majid.

In his sermon al-Mahdi condemned Israel's seizure of Palestinian land in Jerusalem, warning of the effects of this on the peace process. He also welcomed dialogue endeavors in Algeria.

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On the AIPC, led by al-Turabi, al-Mahdi said that "this congress is called the People's Congress, when the invitations (for its recent meeting in Khartoum) were distributed by Sudanese embassies abroad, and the Sudanese state provided all facilities for it as if it was an official conference."

He added: The host people, that is the Sudanese people, are absent and are represented in the congress by just a very small minority. The congress' bylaws recognize political parties and include them in its membership. But the host country is represented by individuals who have no recognized people's political entity, and its regime does not recognize parties."

He said that the congress' meeting was an arena for inflammatory speeches, while its recommendations were hollow and soft, apologizing for the speakers' zeal.

He said that he spoke with some of those who participated in the congress meeting and asked them whether they thought the current Sudanese experiment is so successful that it can be followed, but they said the opposite is the case. He also asked them "whether the Islamic experiment's link with dictatorship, as is the case in Sudan, helps the Islamic movement in the world." They said no.

Al-Mahdi went on: "That conference did not serve the cause of Islam in Sudan or in the world. Maybe some of the regime's leaders thought that it was a useful public relations platform — which is not true."

He attacked the elections held recently in Sudan, saying that they were conducted "under the emergency law, which is still hanging over the Sudanese people's necks in the absence of the basic freedoms and a neutral election committee."

He listed his criticisms of the way these elections were conducted, saying that they were a referendum in which the Sudanese people peacefully expressed their rejection of the regime's policies and institutions.

On what has been reported about dialogue endeavors in the country, al-Mahdi said that "the Salvation [Revolution] experiment is a failure by national standards." He pointed to economic conditions, the lack of a peaceful solution in the south, and Sudan's isolation. He said that "the Salvation [Revolution] experiment represents a big adversary in the balance of Sudanese national reconciliation." However, he welcomed in this context the Rome document signed by the Algerian parties, saying that it can be learned from.

He criticized the practices committed in the name of Islam and the excesses committed through these practices. He said: "The democratic transformation in Sudan is without doubt approaching. When God wants something to happen, He provides the elements for it. The only disagreement among the wise is over ways of achieving this transformation and its timing." He expressed his hope that "this transformation will take place soon without any bloodshed."

Opposition Leader Issues Statement Upon Arrest

MM1705142295 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 17 May 95 pp 1, 4

[Reports by 'Uthman Mirghani in London and Zayn al-'Abidin Ahmad in Cairo: "Al-Mahdi: I Will Not Respond to Arbitrary Investigations"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Sudanese authorities yesterday morning arrested al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, former prime minister and leader of the opposition Ummah Party, just days after a speech he made during prayers marking the blessed 'Id al-Adha in which he fiercely attacked the regime saying that "its downfall is coming without any doubt, and the only thing sensible people disagree on is how and when." Upon his arrest, al-Mahdi prepared a statement entitled "a message to the Sudanese masses," which was distributed by the Ummah Party inside Sudan. In his message, al-Mahdi warned that he would not respond to any arbitrary investigations and would not answer any question except under a judicial investigation before a just court.

In his message, of which AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT received a copy, al-Mahdi said: "This is to let the people of Sudan know that my position in the face of this arrest and in any interrogation is that I will reaffirm what I said and called for in my 'Id al-Adha speech regarding the regime and the required change. I am prepared to substantiate the criticism and accusations I made against the regime and its practices before an independent judicial authority."

Al-Mahdi added: "This time I will not respond to any arbitrary investigations by the security organs. I call for a judicial investigation under the supervision of a just court, otherwise I will not answer any questions whatever the consequences. I hold the regime's organs responsible for the consequences of any hostile irresponsible attitude towards me or al-Ansar [Movement]."

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Mubarak al-Mahdi, the Ummah Party's official in charge of foreign affairs, issued a statement in London yesterday saying that a security force under the command of security officer Hasan Muslimi went to the home of al-Sadiq al-Mahdi in Omdurman at 1130 yesterday and "took him to a secret security detention camp without giving any reason and without producing any legal papers."

The statement added: "We in the Ummah Party, while anxious to maintain our policy of self-restraint, warn the desperate regime against threatening the safety or life of al-Sadiq al-Mahdi or harming him in any way, because if it did we would settle the score severely and we would retaliate twice as hard." [passage omitted]

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Kuwait

*Regime Accused of Altering Anti-Israeli Rhetoric

95LH0122A Paris AL-MUHARRIR in Arabic 13 Mar 95 p 5

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait has, in turn, fallen in the turbulent sea of the Islamic trend, which is knocking strongly at the Gulf doors. This trend has infiltrated into Kuwait through doors the al-Sabah family has widely opened to every Western alien thing. It penetrated into an exhausted, unhealthy, and frightened society, despite the thousands of American and British troops and the hundreds of aircraft, missiles, defense and early warning systems, and defense treaties that have mortgaged the country until God knows when.

It seems that the Khomeyni cocoon has found in Kuwait a fertile soil to hatch easily inside and around the existing fragile regime and to spread like fire. Overnight, this fundamentalist tide, which is called "the Islamic bloc," was able to completely control half the Kuwaiti National Assembly seats, pose a threat to the government and tribal regime, and upset the equations of family domination of the country's resources.

For the first time in the history of the only parliament in the Gulf Cooperation Council states, a minister from the al-Sabah family faced a vote of no confidence. He barely won by one or two votes. This was described as the first confrontation of its kind between two trends. The first carried the banner of "progress and development," led by the members of the al-Sabah family, and the other carried the banner of the "fundamentalist trend," which is seeking to impose its program on the Kuwaiti society. Despite the uneasiness of the Arab peoples about "the fundamentalist wave," which is lashing at them in Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and southern Iraq, its spread with such speed inside Kuwaiti society confirms that the Kuwaitis are increasingly distancing themselves from the existing regime and adopting any new trend.

In an attempt to confine the disagreement to the Islamists and Education and Higher Education Minister Ahmad al-Ruba'i, against whom the vote of no confidence was proposed, and give the impression that the opposition is directed against one individual and not against the regime, the office of Prime Minister and Heir Apparent Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Sabah leaked information to the media at home and abroad that the Islamists regard al-Ruba'i as their number one enemy, because he uprooted them from their stronghold in the Education Ministry, which they dominated for 30 years.

However, the Islamists responded directly to the al-Sabah family, exposing the new real image of the state. They said that, at Chief of State Jabir's request, al-Ruba'i had requested that changes be made in the Kuwaiti Islamic studies' curriculum. These changes included omitting some Koranic verses about the Jews and abolishing educational subjects about the danger of Zionism. Deputy Mufrij Nahhar, a member of the Islamic bloc in the National Assembly, printed and distributed documents showing the Koranic verses omitted from the curriculum.

This is not the first time in the past four years in which the Kuwaiti regime has tried to omit or abolish anti-Israeli documents. Brochures distributed by the Kuwaiti Airlines abroad contained an old map of the Middle East. This map, which had appeared in these brochures in the past three decades and carried the name "occupied Palestine," has been replaced with a new map carrying the name "State of Israel." Everything considered detrimental to Zionism was removed from all the publications and documents of Kuwaiti diplomatic missions in the world. "A new diplomatic language" was circulated among these missions, in line with the "new developments in the Middle East," particularly after the Jabir al-Sabah's government has lifted the second and third levels of the boycott of Israel during the past two years.

AL-MUHARRIR has received confirmation to reports from Kuwaiti press sources that Kuwaiti and Israeli officials, who have been meeting in Washington and other Western and Eastern capitals since January 1992, have reached an agreement to normalize their relations secretly, and that they will sign the agreement "when circumstances permit." By then, these relations would have already been in existence, normal, and continuing.

United Arab Emirates

UN Envoy Expresses 'Deep Regret' Over U.S. Veto

JN1805105195 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0918 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 18 May (WAKH) — In its capacity as president of the current Arab League Council's session, The United Arab Emirates [UAE] has voiced its deep regret at failure to adopt the draft resolution submitted by the Nonaligned Movement states member in the Security Council on Israel's confiscation of lands in east Jerusalem. It also expressed its regret and astonishment at the negative position of the United States of America during the vote on the draft resolution.

This came in a statement delivered by 'Ali Thani al-Suwaydi, minister plenipotentiary and charge d'affaires of the UAE mission at the United Nations, at the Security Council following the vote on the draft resolution.

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The United States vetoed the draft resolution during the session held early this morning.

In his statement, al-Suwaydi said: Having listened to the statements of the Council's members before and after the vote — statements which asserted the status of holy Jerusalem in the international community — the Security Council now fully realizes that the failure to adopt this draft resolution will have negative repercussions, not only in the Arab world but also throughout the whole world.

He called on the Security Council to demand Israel to cancel its decision to confiscate Arab Palestinian lands in east Jerusalem.

Yemen

Upcoming Salih Visit to Saudi Arabia Detailed

MM1705153895 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 17 May 95 pp 1, 4

[Report on telephone interview with House of Representatives Speaker Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar by Hasin al-Bunyan in Sanaa on 16 May]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh — Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih will visit Saudi Arabia in the last week of this month. It will be the first visit by the Yemeni president to Saudi Arabia since the Gulf war. This was revealed to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT by Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, speaker of the Yemeni House of Representatives and grand chief of the Hashid tribes, in a telephone interview with him in Sanaa yesterday.

Al-Ahmar said: "It will be a historic meeting in the interest of the two fraternal neighboring countries."

He added: The meeting will be successful and useful and will bring all that is good for the two peoples and countries ensuring the return of amity and accord and continuation of the relations of brotherhood and affection between Saudi Arabia and Yemen, and consolidating security, peace, and stability in the region.

Shaykh al-Ahmar also said that the political leadership in Riyadh and Sanaa have agreed in principle to hold the meeting in the last week of this month, but the final date for the visit will be set in consultations between the two sides in the coming few days.

He added: "The meeting between the custodian of the two holy mosques and President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih will be the very essence of normalization between the two countries."

[Al-Bunyan] Will the two leaders sign the memorandum of understanding concluded between the two governments on 27 Ramadan [28 February] in holy Mecca?

[Al-Ahmar] The two leaders will certainly sign the memorandum. Everything will be announced in time.

[Al-Bunyan] Is that why the instruments of ratification of the memorandum were exchanged between Riyadh and Sanaa the day before yesterday?

[Al-Ahmar] The exchange means that the memorandum has become official, effective, and in force and that there is no longer any disagreement between the two governments on its contents and that no difficulties or obstacles stand in the way of the six committees formed by the two sides under the memorandum. [passage omitted]

[Al-Bunyan] You previously said that the Higher Joint Committee, under the cochairmanship of Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz and yourself, would meet after the blessed 'Id al-Adha. Has a date now been set?

[Al-Ahmar] The Higher Committee will meet after King Fahd's meeting with President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih in the last week of this month. [passage omitted]

[Al-Bunyan] It has been rumored that the military on both sides have agreed to reduce the volume of armed forces deployed by both sides on the border.

[Al-Ahmar] You mentioned that in AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT. There is nothing concealed other than what has been published, but I say that the latest meeting produced good results and opened the way for work by both sides.

[Al-Bunyan] When will the Joint Military Committee meet?

[Al-Ahmar] It will meet next month. When the Higher Joint Committee meets in the last week of this month it will set the date for the reactivation of the work and activities of the other committees. [passage omitted]

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INA Reports U.S. Veto Against Jerusalem Resolution

JN1805085695 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0820 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] New York, 18 May (INA) — At dawn today, the United States vetoed a draft resolution at the UN Security Council demanding the Zionist entity rescind the confiscation of land in Jerusalem.

The voting at the UN Security Council early today came one week after discussions and consultations, and after a series of amendments to the original text of a draft resolution calling on the Zionist authorities to rescind the confiscation of Arab lands in occupied Jerusalem.

This is the first veto of its kind the United States has used at the Security Council for five years. The last time the United States used the veto was in May 1990 to obstruct a draft resolution concerning the Zionist settlements in the occupied territories.

All other 14 Security Council member states voted for the draft resolution. However, the U.S. Administration's veto was sufficient to prevent its issuance. The U.S. representative justified the veto by saying that the United Nations should not be concerned with what she described as sensitive issues linked to the Palestinian-Zionist peace process. Albright said she used the veto without any hesitation and considered it as a matter of principle. [passage omitted]

Travelers Claim Saddam Beefing Up Forces in South

NC1705144595 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Saddam Husayn's regime has reinforced its military forces stationed in southern Iraq with fresh units, particularly in the areas near the Huwayzah marsh.

Travelers from the south said they saw military convoys comprising troop carriers, armored vehicles, and heavy artillery moving southward at the beginning of this week.

Opposition Claims Government Attacks

NC1405162995 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 14 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Regime forces, composed of Army, security, and ruling party personnel, launched a ferocious offensive against the al-Busayyah Marsh area in al-Samamah District in southern Iraq last month.

According to our sources, troops stationed in al-Samamah and al-Nasiriyah took part in the offensive.

The sources add that the heroes of the resistance and tribesmen in the al-Busayyah Marsh area repulsed the attack. In a fierce battle that lasted for several hours, the regime suffered tremendous losses that forced it to retreat under the blows of the heroes of the resistance and the tribesmen.

Our sources say that the forces of the defeated regime tried to organize their remnants, but groups of resistance fighters ambushed them on one of the roads leading to the al-Busayyah Marsh, dealt them several painful blows, and compelled them to pull back.

The regime's force suffered dozens of dead and wounded. The resistance forces seized large quantities of weapons and light equipment.

Meanwhile, the forces of the tyrant Saddam's regime continued violating the Iraqi people's human rights. They continued their acts of repression against civilians and tribesmen living in Iraq's southern governorates. According to reports sent by our sources in the south, the tyrant's forces attacked civilian population centers belonging to the clans of Al Hasan, Al Ibrahim, al-Dawwarah, Al Rahmah, and Al Rumayyid in the Suq al-Shuyukh area in al-Nasiriyah [Dhi Qar] Governorate in southern Iraq in the first half of April.

The reports say that more than 50 armored vehicles and troop carriers took part in the brutal attack, for which the regime forces prepared with a heavy artillery bombardment.

The reports add that there were heavy losses among unarmed civilians: Seven people were killed, three houses and large areas of wheat and barley crops were set on fire, and large numbers of livestock died.

The sources say that the regime forces arrested a number of tribesmen during their brutal attack on these residential areas.

Two Mojahedin-e Khalq Members Killed; Tehran Blamed

NC1705134195 Paris AFP in English 1218 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Baghdad, May 17 (AFP) — Gunmen shot dead two women officials with Iran's armed opposition People's Mojahedin [Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization] and seriously wounded another in a machine-gun attack here Wednesday [17 May] blamed on Tehran.

The three women were heading in a Toyota Landcruiser to a training camp 70 kilometers (40 miles) north of Baghdad when gunmen in a white Volkswagen opened fire, a spokesman for the Iraqi-based group said.

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The assailants fled after the driver and his frontseat male passenger, both members of the Mojahedin's National Liberation Army (NLA), returned fire as the cars passed each other near traffic lights in Baghdad's northern suburbs.

The women were unarmed.

'Effat Haddad, an NLA logistics commander, and Fereshteh Esfandiari, a senior public relations officer with the Mojahedin, will be buried later in the day in a Mojahedin camp outside the capital, a spokesman said.

Esfandiari had two brothers killed in NLA operations.

Seddiqeh Khoda'i-Sefat was recovering in the hospital where she was expected to undergo an operation to extract a bullet from her shoulder, the Mojahedin told AFP.

The group accused "agents" of the Iranian government of having carried out the "cowardly" attack, the "33rd committed against the Mojahedin movement since the beginning of 1993."

There was no immediate reaction from Tehran.

Mojahedin leader Mas'ud Rajavi sent telegrams urging UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali and members of the Security Council to "condemn this crime" which he blamed on Tehran.

And Rajavi also called on Baghdad to "punish the terrorists severely," according to the statement.

The last attack against the Mojahedin took place on April 18 when its headquarters, located in a military zone with limited access, came under fire from rocket propelled anti-tank grenades, but nobody was hurt.

Iran was also blamed for that attack.

Rajavi has accused the Iranian embassy in Baghdad of carrying out the attacks against his group in the Iraqi capital and elsewhere in the country. [passage omitted]

Opposition Leader on Turkish Claims, U.S. Influence

NC1505111195 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 13 May 95 p 11

[Interview with Hani al-Fukayki, "a leader of the unified Iraqi National Congress," by Subhi Zu'aytir; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Zu'aytir] What is the position of the Iraqi opposition on the Turkish military operation in northern Iraq and on Turkey's border demarcation proposal?

[Al-Fukayki] Turkey has domestic economic and political problems. As everyone knows, the value of the Turkish lira is rapidly declining, unemployment is expanding, and Islamic trends are growing. The Turkish military is also searching for a role to justify its huge financial spending, which consumes Turkey's national income. If we add to this the fact that Europe is linking Turkey's membership in the European Community with the Turkish Government's failure to solve the Kurdish problem militarily or democratically, we can sense the factors that paved the way for the Turkish invasion of Iraqi territory. Turkey was trying to play a role not only in containing the Kurdish problem, in both Turkey and Iraq, but also in influencing Iraq's political future, whether under the existing Iraqi regime or in its absence.

The Iraqi opposition had information pointing to collusion between the Turkish Government and the Baghdad regime before the invasion to control all regions north of the 36th parallel (extending from Irbil to Zakho and going through Shaqlawah and Dahuk). This would place the oil pipeline and the international highway under the control of the Turkish Army and place a main Turkish faction before the fait accompli, especially if we consider the inter-Kurdish armed conflict and the desire by one Kurdish side or another to cancel out the other. But the Turkish invasion revealed the failure of the Turkish campaign to deal with the Kurdistan Workers Party [PKK]. Most PKK fighters withdrew weeks before the invasion. The invasion also showed the confusion of the Turkish Administration and the conflict among decisionmaking centers as regards the political objectives of the military campaign.

It is useful to mention that the Turkish invasion coincided with attacks by the Iraqi opposition forces (the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the Iraqi Communist Party, the Kurdistan Communist Party, the Assyrian Democratic Party, the Islamic Action organization, and the Iraqi National Congress) against Iraqi Army positions in Mosul and Karkuk.

The Turkish invasion decisively and rapidly changed local, regional, and international alliances. This added to the failure of the Turkish operation. As everybody knows, the official Iraqi position changed two weeks after the failure of the invasion and the confusion and retreat of the Turkish Administration.

We as Iraqi opposition were the first to condemn the Turkish invasion and demand that the Turkish forces immediately withdraw from Iraqi territory and respect Iraq's sovereignty and international border. I was the one who sent urgent messages to the UN secretary general, the Arab League secretary general, and all Arab foreign ministers urging them to intervene to withdraw

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the Turkish forces from Iraqi territory and to confront the Turkish invasion.

While we appreciate the difficult problems Turkey is facing, especially its failure to solve the Kurdish problem in Turkey in a democratic way, we do not object to Turkish President Suleyman Demirel's request to demarcate the border, provided that the Iraqi border move north, to the plains near Diyarbakir. This will put the Turkish Army in a better position to stop infiltrations into Turkish territory. Perhaps it is also useful for Turkey to return the Iskenderun region to Syria so that things can go back to normal. We agree with President Demirel that this border modification can be achieved through dialogue and peaceful means, in a way that ensures the security and stability of the region.

In a previous meeting between an Iraqi National Congress [INC] delegation and former Turkish President Ozal, the president told us about the domestic pressure, the military one in particular, and the encouragement by some Arab countries, to get Turkey to claim the region of Mosul to fragment and break up Iraq and cancel out its role as a major regional power; the fact that Iraq is an oil- producing country will undoubtedly help it come out of the current ordeal relatively quickly.

What I want to say is that although we know that the Turkish administration is blundering and looking for any political gain to cover up for the failure of the invasion, we must be cautious and vigilant regarding the Turkish claims because they are not the demands of Turkey alone. [passage omitted]

[Zu'aytir] Where does the Iraqi opposition, both Kurdish and Arab, stand four years after the Gulf war?

[Al-Fukayki] I can probably say that the most important achievement of the Iraqi opposition was to move the opposition action into the country, benefiting in this from the situation in the north. It took the opposition from the stage of meetings, statements, and slogans to the stage of field action on Iraqi territories with the aim of mobilizing the people and weakening the regime's organs and pillars.

Another achievement was to bring the Iraqi opposition forces together in a political and democratic framework (the INC) which now includes all the Iraqi political and national trends.

The Iraqi opposition had accomplished good and real achievements in the democratic struggle inside Iraq in the past few years. But we need to bring things out into the open, and I am not saying self- criticism, because our Iraqi people and the opposition forces have the right to know about the diseases and obstacles prevailing in the Iraqi arena that lead in one way or another to setbacks or lapses which had to be faced wisely and courageously.

We see that some political movements have given and are continuing to give their own views and objectives priority over the common objective and are trying to score partisan or sectional gains at the expense of the general national action.

The odd thing is that international and regional parties are effectively helping strengthen these actions and encouraging these movements to move away from respect for the institutions and frameworks we are promising the Iraqi people.

If we add to this the presence of the INC and Iraqi opposition parties in Iraq's Kurdistan and the consequent effects of the local situation on the opposition's political performance we find that the inter-Kurdish fighting and the setback suffered by the Kurdish parliament and government have had a negative and severe effect on the overall position of the Iraqi opposition.

The fact is that whoever is in possession of the ground also controls the political and military decision. The problem that the Iraqi opposition is today facing in north Iraq is that it could not or had not succeeded in becoming the central point of reference for all the parties, especially the Kurdish ones.

What is more worrying is the continued inter-Kurdish fighting and the fact that some Kurdish parties are negotiating with countries such as Turkey, Iran, and France, and possibly the Baghdad government, without soliciting the view of or giving a role to the senior Arab partner in the Iraqi opposition ranks or to the INC in which the Kurds have a heavy presence.

[Zu'aytir] Has northern Iraq become a Kurdish region and has the Arab element disappeared there?

[Al-Fukayki] The talk about an Arab element needs deliberation and accuracy. The Arab element exists, both through the Islamic organizations, the Iraqi Communist Party's organizations, and the democratic Arab personalities and centers. But there is talk about a greater presence for the democratic Arabic trend, or as some insist on calling it, the strong Arab trend. We need to increase the weight of this trend and also its presence, particularly when we know that the Arab dimension inside the INC circles and its political performance are weak and limited when compared to the wagering on the regional and international dimensions, especially the U.S. one. I say without hesitation that U.S. influences on the Iraqi opposition's actions have been negative and bad and have harmed the democratic action, contrary to what the U.S. Administration is claiming.

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Western influences have created centers of power inside the Iraqi opposition that are incongruent and competing with each other and boasting of their favored position with or closeness to the U.S. decision-making center.

Like other regional, Arab, and Western countries, the U.S. Administration sends envoys to Kurdistan from time to time to assess the situation. Some of these envoys stayed in Baghdad during the Iraqi-Iranian war to help the current regime in its war against Iran. But these envoys do not do much and only bolster these incongruous trends.

Interior Minister Notes Plan To 'Uproot' Crime

JN1505203695 Baghdad AL-'IRAQ in Arabic 9 May 95 p 2

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Interior Ministry has begun implementing a plan to obliterate and uproot crime from the society, pursuing advanced and meticulous techniques, Interior Minister Watban Ibrahim al-Hasan told AL-'IRAQ. The interior minister, also acting as police director general until further notice, said: It is our duty to do everything possible to provide comfort for the Iraqi citizen and make him feel that the Interior Ministry personnel are everywhere to protect his life and property.

The interior minister added that, most regrettably, the circumstances and repercussions of the blockade have resulted in some crimes, especially car thefts. He said that the Interior Ministry has been paying special attention to this subject to contain it as much as possible. He said all requirements have been provided and all the ministry's potential has been devoted to help launching the "counterattack against crime." He said the plan is being supervised in the field by the interior minister. Meanwhile, he said, the Interior Ministry under secretaries are supervising the general directorates of the Internal Security Forces Department. The Internal Security Forces Department's directors general are supervising all field units.

He said that strict measures and speedy and meticulous plans have been prepared to hunt down criminals and outlaws.

In his statement to AL-'IRAQ, the interior minister said all squads, control points in Baghdad and governorates' entrances, and patrols have been ordered to work with a team spirit within the plan prepared by the ministry to obliterate all forms of crime.

He indicated that all the criminals who will be arrested for committing crimes against citizens or their property will be referred to the Interior Ministry's court to receive their just punishment for the crimes they have committed.

The minister warned criminals disrupting citizens' security and tranquility that they will receive the most stringent penalties for their heinous acts which contravene our society's values and traditions.

He urged all citizens to fully cooperate with the Internal Security Forces by informing them of any crime, giving accurate descriptions of criminals, and providing any information that could lead to criminals' arrests. He noted that cooperation between citizens and the ministry organs will prevent the spread of crime.

Watban Ibrahim al-Hasan asserted that the ministry organs will circulate through the mass media the names and photos of arrested criminals and the number of crimes they have committed so that our proud people will be acquainted with the results of the Interior Ministry's counterattack being implemented thanks to the efforts of our zealous people who have proved their sincere and fruitful cooperation with the ministry organs in arresting criminals.

In conclusion, on behalf of all the Interior Ministry personnel, the interior minister pledged to mujahid leader President Saddam Husayn and our people to continue efforts to uproot crime and provide security and tranquility for our entire people and to protect their lives and property.

***Paper on Agricultural Produce, Unstable Prices**

95LH0125A Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 5 Mar 95 p 5

[Report by AL-JUMHURIYAH Investigations Department]

[FBIS Translated Text] We do not deny that we had a problem choosing how to begin this investigation, especially as the prices of agricultural produce have been fluctuating up and down. We had to ask ourselves why this is happening, and who is behind the crises that happen from time to time because of the disappearance of this produce or that?

Overnight, the price of a kilogram of produce goes up by about 25 dinars. When we ask about the reason, the answer is always: the embargo. We know that the reason is greed, because what changes take place overnight to make prices go up.

The farmer is used to hide his produce to secure a higher price. He has succeeded in dictating the price he wants. We asked why there have been occasional shortages of tomatoes or potatoes. The answer is simple. In the case of tomatoes, the reason is the absence of

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substitutes, such as tomato paste, whose price goes up when there is a shortage. What is the solution? We do not know but ask: Where are the scores of share holding companies that have been established to provide agricultural produce? When they were established, these companies claimed that they will contribute to easing the embargo's effects and that they have a transportation fleet.

We propose that the general association of cooperatives, which has given its transportation fleet to contractors and drivers for a monthly fee, use the large trucks at least once a week to transport the agricultural produce.

The drop in the prices of agricultural produce is natural and makes us very happy. We hope they will continue to go down. We went to the Agriculture Ministry to ask about the reasons for the occasional increase in prices. An official source told us that a committee composed of representatives of the general association of farmer organizations, the general association of cooperatives, and the Interior Ministry, and headed by the Agriculture Ministry's undersecretary fixes the prices of fruits and vegetables every week. The prices are appropriate for the farmer and the consumer. Nevertheless, to trick the price control committees, many merchants display a price list, but do not abide by it. Some merchants sell the fruits and vegetables at prices higher than the approved list. Some also cheat at the scale. The source continued: The Agriculture Ministry's task is to set the prices. The party cadres and the people's councils have the duty to inspect and control prices and to make sure that merchants implement decree No. 56. The source said that the price of potatoes went up because the Commerce Ministry banned their importation since the beginning of January 1994 and no longer control the price. The price of onions went up because the farmers store them until they get a higher price.

The truth is that all the sellers display the prices on a blackboard and next to each produce. The role of an inspector—if there was one—is to make sure that they display the price list. He does not ask the shopkeeper how much he sells a certain produce for.

We went to the association of farmers' organizations to hear what its chairman, Saljar Zubayr, has to say. The shortage in and the rise in the prices of agricultural produce, he said, is due to manipulation by shopkeepers, the large number of intermediaries, and the tendency of some farmers to sell their produce to owners of private factories, who store them for a time and then send them to the market when prices go up. Consequently, the pertinent authorities have issued a decision to close these factories. Among the other reasons is the rise in the cost of transportation; the price of plastic sheets, insecticides, and fertilizers; and the cost of maintaining agricultural machinery. This is besides the rise in the prices of the other industrial commodities. The heavy rain at this time of the year has also affected agricultural produce. The farmer cannot bear the burden of the resulting increases from time to time. The association has submitted several proposals that could stabilize prices. We suggested that an official body assume the task of marketing the agricultural produce from the farmland to the market. (We also hope that prices will stabilize permanently at a level compatible with the citizen's standard of living).

We then tried to ask about the implementation of decree No. 56. The Revolution Command Council has issued this decree, authorizing party cadres and the people's councils to inspect prices and bring violators to account. We visited several party teams and people's councils and asked the officials about their role in checking the prices of food stuffs, including fruits and vegetables. Their answers reflected common despair. Comrade Mahmud Shukur Isma'il, secretary of the party's second team in al-Rasafah said: Although the wise political leadership is seriously trying to deal with the problems facing the people and to find suitable solutions by making sound decisions, some departments do not cooperate seriously with these decisions; and other parties adopt some measures, which raise questions. For example, the Trade Ministry once set a price for a food commodity that was higher than the prevailing market price in the market then. A price's committee abolished the prices of some commodities because they were in short supply, promising to reset the prices when they become available again. These commodities became widely available immediately after they abolished the fixed prices, but no prices were set again.

Comrades Amir Abd Muhammad al-Dulaymi, official responsible for the security and economic committees, and Ali Sayfallah, chairman of the people's councils, joined in the conversation. They said that they formed a working team to follow up food prices. We were able, before the cancellation of special prices, to ensure that the largest number of residents in the area were able to secure the food stuffs they needed, they said.

We also talked to Comrade Hilal Yasin, chairman of the people's council of the al-Maghrib party team. He said: Despite all the measures we have taken, we feel a problem has not been resolved yet. The farmers, grocers, and retail agents have a common complaint. They mostly complain about the increase in the cost of transportation. We suggested that the Transportation and Communications Ministry and other cooperatives provide trucks to transport the produce at nominal fees, he said. Another problem exists in some farmers'

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markets, where people violate the law by renting shops and writing receipts for less than the proper price.

On the al-Ta'awun al-'Arabi street, in al-Sayyidiyah, where party cadres were inspecting fruit and vegetable sellers, Comrades Jabbar Kazim al-'Abdi, member of the al-Sayyidiyah party organization, and Abd-al-Razzaq Dahlam, member of the people's council in the area, stressed that the party cadres and members of the people's council in the area are following up prices under the supervision of Comrade Muhsin al-Zubaydi, secretary of the party team.

Many people think that the lack of price stability in farmers' markets was due to the rise in rents. We went to the Jumaylah, al-Rashid, al-Talji, al-Rashidiyah, and other farmers' markets to find out the truth. Abd-al-Hamid Maysam, director of property affairs at the Baghdad municipality, affirmed that prices go up before the municipality announces that it is renting shops in farmers' markets by public auction. He said: We are not responsible for farmers' markets rented by certain people for a long time. The municipality, for example, rented a piece of land to a contractor, who built a vegetable market on it and rented it out. Nevertheless, the ownership of the land and everything on it will revert to the Baghdad municipality after the 15-year lease.

We have learned by accident that the rent of this land was about 1 million dinars and that the contractor interferes in one way or another in the prices of vegetables and fruits and forces the shopkeepers to sell at the prices he wants. In one public auction, they rented a shop in the Jumaylah farmers' market for 30,000 dinars. The rent then went up gradually to 107,500 dinars.

We asked the shopkeepers who sell nylon sheets for greenhouses in al-Shurjah and al-Suq al-'Arabi about the secret of the availability of thousands of meters of this material there. We were surprised to hear their answers. Some owners of agricultural land, they said, sell their quota of nylon material in the market, without using it to cover their crops.

Expert Yusuf Ayyub, representative of the general establishment for petrochemical industries at Baghdad International Fair, told us that the plastic sheets are distributed annually to the farmers, whose produce demands their use. This is done under the supervision of the Agriculture Ministry, the farmers' organizations, and the petrochemical industries' establishment. They supply the factories of the socialist and joint sectors with polyethylene material that goes into the production of plastics. Their products meet international specifications. The plastic materials produced by the private-sector factories are manufactured from used materials collected from houses and the streets. The farmer who sells plastic sheets at high prices in the local markets commits an act of sabotage. The pertinent authorities are watching this closely. To be fair, we have heard that nylon sheets are not distributed to all the farmers.

We ask the colleagues who not long ago proposed that prices be increased to ensure the flow of agricultural produce: Have they discovered the disadvantages of their proposal? The official institution has been fair to the farmer. It encouraged him by deciding to raise the prices. However, the farmer has become greedy.

As we continue to search for a solution to the problem of prices, we affirm that we are not greedy. We are employees trying to earn our living, and we pray God to give us our daily bread. Again we ask: Is the embargo the real reason?

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Peres Downplays UNSC Resolution on Expropriations

TA1805125695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres is downplaying the significance of the UN Security Council [UNSC] draft resolution regarding land expropriation in Jerusalem. Minister Peres told correspondents in Paris that the Arabs had made a mistake when they transferred the expropriations issue to the Arab League and the UNSC instead of dealing with the matter by direct negotiations with Israel. Mr. Peres said this has caused all the sides to embrace extremist positions.

Regarding the negotiations on the next stage of the autonomy, Mr. Peres said the Palestinians are overclouding the negotiations with a constant atmosphere of crisis and complaints, which is slowing down the negotiations.

Jordanian, Egyptian Envoys Condemn Land Expropriation

TA1805132595 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Jordanian and Egyptian ambassadors in Israel today convened an impromptu news conference in which they expressed dissatisfaction with Israel's decision to expropriate land in Jerusalem. Jordanian Ambassador Marwan al-Mu'ashshir said that despite the dissatisfaction with Israel's moves, Jordan remains committed to the peace agreement.

Egyptian Ambassador Muhammad Basyuni said that if Israel removes the obstacles on the path to peace and refrains from expropriating land, it will be able to see the Syrian and Lebanese ambassadors in Israel.

Ahmad al-Tibi said Israel is violating the agreements with the Palestinians, as far as they relate to Jerusalem. This is reported by our correspondents Yoni Ben-Menahem and Meron Tzur.

Jordanian Envoy on Parliamentarians' Stand on Peace

JN1705165795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1526 GMT 17 May 95

[From the "With the Events" feature]

[FBIS Translated Text] Let us move to the visit to Nazareth by Jordanian Ambassador to Israel Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir. Let us speak to our correspondent there, Muhammad Sharif. Good evening.

[Begin recording] [Sharif] Good evening. Yes, a short while ago, Jordanian Ambassador to Israel Dr. Marwan ai-Mua'shshir arrived at the premises of the Arab Democratic Party in Nazareth. After shaking hands with him, I asked him about the reports carried today that three-quarters of the Jordanian Parliament's members are demanding a suspension of the peace treaty with Israel. He replied by saying:

[Al-Mua'shshir] As a matter of fact, the position of the Jordanian House of Representatives reflects the overall indignation felt by the average Jordanians over land confiscations in Jerusalem. This is in line with the official Jordanian position, which holds the view that the confiscations are extremely serious, and that Israel must realize that it cannot take unilateral measures toward Jerusalem without provoking the sentiments of the Arabs and Muslims in general. It is our hope that this issue will be taken up at the mini summit due to be held in Morocco soon. During this mini summit, the Arab conferees will hopefully hold consultations and discussions and come up with a unified stand on this issue.

[Sharif] After a while, the reception ceremony in honor of Jordanian Ambassador to Israel Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir will begin. [end recording]

'Sources': Jordanian Parliament Decision 'Not Binding'

TA1805050895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] More than 60 members of the Jordanian Parliament have demanded that the peace agreement with Israel be suspended due to Israeli land expropriations.

Political sources in Jerusalem said in reaction that the Amman parliament decision is not binding and there is no need to get excited because of it.

Rabin: Peace With Syria Possible Before Elections

TA1805145695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Rabin believes the upcoming Labor Party convention cannot pass any decisions that would change the party platform or make any decisions in anticipation of the upcoming elections. Rabin said that such decisions can be made only in the convention to be held in approximately one year. Our correspondent Pe'erli Shahar reports that Mr. Rabin made these remarks in the Labor Party Standing Committee session in Bet Berl. Mr. Rabin also believes the party had better refrain from changing its platform a year and a half before the elections.

Referring to the negotiations with Syria, the prime minister said there are currently great difficulties in

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these negotiations. He said this in reaction to Knesset Member Qahalani's announcement that he will not support the establishment of a new party at this stage because he was told there will be no agreement with Syria in this term in office. Mr. Rabin clarified, however, that he cannot state there will be no peace with Syria by the next elections.

Labor Member Sees No Peace With Syria in Current Term

TA1805070595 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Labor Party Knesset Member Avigdor Qahalani says he will not support the proposal raised today at the Third Way Council meeting to make the group a political party. Qahalani says he has been convinced that there will not be a peace treaty with Syria during the current Knesset term. A central theme in the Third Way campaign has been to prevent a Golan Heights withdrawal.

Qol Yisra'el has been told that the assurances were relayed to Qahalani by messengers with the knowledge of Prime Minister Rabin. But Third Way Council Chairman Yehuda Har'el says he does not believe promises anymore, after hearing in the last election campaign from Rabin that anyone who comes down from the Golan Heights would be abandoning Israeli security.

'Sources' Say Syria 'Will Not Reject' U.S. Offers

TA1805111095 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 18 May 95 p 9

[Report by Hemi Shalev]

[FBIS Translated Text] Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad will not reject outright the new phrasing offers the United States presented to Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and will work to have a shuttle mission in the region by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher or his aide, Dennis Ross, take place in the coming weeks. This assessment was made by Jerusalem political sources last night.

According to the sources, the new phrasings attempt to bypass the issue of equality [shivyon] in security arrangements on the Golan Heights in a way that will allow Syria to claim that it has attained equal arrangements while Israel maintains its position which opposes practical equality in the size of the demilitarized territory on both sides of the border. The Americans are trying to find the golden path between the term "reciprocal" [hadadi] which Israel accepts and the term "equal" [shave] which Israel rejects, that will allow the resumption of the chiefs of staff talks in June.

The sources added that, last week, there also was disagreement over the role the United States plays in the negotiations. Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Professor Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador to the United States, last week denied the existence of "U.S. bridging offers." Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and the U.S. peace team, on the other hand, have said that the United States did present "bridging ideas." Peres and the U.S. team believe that only a significant intensification in the U.S. involvement would bring about a breakthrough in the negotiations.

At the same time, Rabin is not willing to accept a seeming U.S. dictate and he believes that, in any event, if progress is sought, what is needed is a Syrian agreement to hold direct and secret talks, and not a more massive U.S. involvement.

The truth regarding the U.S. "bridging offers" seems to be somewhere in between: The formulae al-Shar' was handed were presented to him as being "U.S. suggestions," but they were based on offers previously made by Israel. The Americans and Peres believe that Syria will find "American offers" easier to digest than Israeli ideas.

Peres Cited on Pullout; Rabin To Halt Referendum

TA1805051095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] More statements attributed to Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres that the government is ready for a complete pullout from the Golan Heights: An official source says the foreign minister made it clear in a meeting two weeks ago with the then visiting U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Madeleine Albright. Differentiating between the 1949 armistice border and the 1967 line, Peres told Albright that Israel could not pull further back to the 1967 position, as demanded by Syria, as it represents a line of aggression by the Syrians on the shores of the Sea of Galilee.

The source said Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin does not expect to go ahead with the referendum. At this point, the assessment is that, in any case, Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad will not decide to go ahead with the peace treaty until at least when next year's elections in Israel are already on the horizon and, therefore, the general ballot would serve as a vote of confidence or no confidence in the peace treaty.

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U.S. Said Apprised of General Golan Withdrawal Lines

TA1705163595 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 May 95 p A2

[Report by political correspondent Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] According to senior political sources, Israel has informed the United States in "general terms" of the lines it is prepared to withdraw to on the Golan Heights. The Israeli sources said the Americans knew "more or less" what the withdrawal lines were. [passage omitted]

The sources asserted that agreement has already been reached on the following points:

— The purpose of the security arrangements: There is no argument over the fact that the security arrangements are designed to prevent border incidents and especially to preclude the possibility of a surprise attack by either party.

— The geographical boundaries of the security arrangements: Israel has acceded to the Syrian demand to limit the extent of the territory in which the security arrangements will be applicable to the area adjoining the border. Rabin has eschewed the opening positions presented to the Syrians by former Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq, such as reducing the size of the Syrian Army and imposing limitations on its deployment even deep inside Syrian territory. This concession came after the Syrians demanded in exchange that Israel relinquish its nuclear capability and agree to Syrian- monitored limitations on the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] deployment from the border to Jerusalem.

President Bill Clinton has clarified that he will not step up U.S. involvement in the Syrian-Israeli negotiations. Officials with the U.S. peace team would like to submit bridging proposals to both sides, but Rabin has rejected this and is only prepared to let the Americans deliver their proposals to the Syrians, after prior coordination with him. Rabin reiterated this position during his recent trip to the United States.

Peres Briefs Slovene Leader on Need To Invest in Syria

TA1805132795 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 18 May 95 pp A1, A2

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar and Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] In a meeting yesterday with Slovene President Milan Kucan, Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres said that "the recruiting of capital for private investments in Syria could help promote progress in the negotiations with Syria." Peres presented his proposals on the matter to President Bill Clinton when the two men met in New York at the end of April.

The foreign minister said that it was important to improve the economic situation in the countries participating in the peace process, but that he was aware of the difficulties involved in recruiting U.S. financial aid for Syria due to the increasing opposition in Congress to foreign aid allocations. Therefore, Peres told Clinton, one must consider a new approach. Instead of granting direct aid to Syria, the funds could be furnished by international organizations such as the World Bank, the regional Bank for Middle East reconstruction and development, and especially through investments by the American private business sector, with U.S. state guarantees' being issued by the agency dealing with foreign investment risks.

During his visit to the United States, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said that Israel was not requesting U.S. aid for Syria. At meetings with the heads of the House Appropriations Committee, Rabin clarified that Israel would not solicit aid for Syria even after both countries have signed a peace treaty.

Rabin Blames Iran for Continuing Palestinian 'Terrorism'

NC1505154995 Paris AFP in English 1505 GMT 15 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jerusalem, May 15 (AFP) — Some hardline Islamic leaders in Gaza were ready to call a halt to "acts of terror" against Israel until Iran intervened, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin charged Monday [15 May].

"The heads of certain organizations were ready to halt terrorist operations not only inside the Gaza Strip and the region of Jericho, but also from these territories," he told parliament.

"However Iran opposed it and put pressure on them," he said.

Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] broke off reconciliation talks with the Palestinian Authority a week ago. Rumours had circulated about deals with the Islamic Jihad in particular to halt armed attacks within the Gaza Strip.

Rabin congratulated the Palestinian Authority for measures taken to rein in the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, which spearhead the armed struggle against the Jewish state.

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"We demand that the Authority fulfill its commitment to fight against terrorism. In recent weeks we have noted that it is acting in this direction."

More than 200 Islamic suspects were rounded up by Palestinian police after a suicide bombing left seven Israelis and an American dead in Gaza on April 9.

And a dozen militants have been jailed by a military court in recent weeks after repeated Israeli demands for a crackdown.

Rabin reiterated that the Islamic Republic of Iran was "Israel's number one enemy" and alleged the regime was trying to obtain "non conventional weapons", a reference to Tehran's nuclear programme.

Iran Said To Be 'Crucial Test' of Clinton's Career

TA1705175295 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 May 95 p B1

[Commentary by 'Aqiva Eldar: "Leadership Under the Iranian Test"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington — Information provided to the U.S. Administration by Iranian defectors dispelled the White House's doubts and made it take off its kid gloves. On 8 January 1995, Iran and Russia signed a huge nuclear deal. President Yeltsin's agreement to withhold the delivery of centrifuges confirms that the deal definitely includes a military element and refutes Iran's argument that its nuclear program has peaceful purposes.

The public relations campaign Tehran launched with the help of visiting prominent U.S. journalists missed its target. The administration, Congress, and even the press do not take the mullahs' denials seriously: The United States knows that Iran is on the nuclear path. If Russia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan refuse to sell it nuclear goods, it will go all the way to China and North Korea. The deeper one investigates the nuclear issue, the more one uncovers about Iran's nuclear program, which immediately brings to mind Iraq's numerous fishy dealings.

Back in November 1994, the White House shrugged off Uri Lubrani, who went to Washington to try to make the United States see that America, along with the scholarly articles written by the heads of the National Security Council in favor of the "dual containment" policy, had been sending the Iranian people a message of business as usual. It did not occur to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, who was visiting the United States at the same time, to propose to Clinton to impose a sweeping embargo on Iran. Even a proposal to ban U.S. companies from developing new oil sources in Iran would have looked like the epitome of chutzpah at that time.

Six months later, along with the pressure on nuclear suppliers around the world to boycott the radical Muslim regime, the United States is almost overtly striving to undermine and even replace the Iranian regime. The U.S. President put Iran at the top of the agenda of his summit with the Russian president, perhaps the last one before the elections. Evidently, Iran is playing the same role in Clinton's career that Iraq played in George Bush's. The heightened profile of the President's personal involvement may turn Iran into a crucial test.

Having said that, the administration committed a series of mistakes as soon as the new policy was launched. First of all, the ayatollahs could not have conceived of a more suitable backdrop for Clinton's announcement of the embargo than the World Jewish Congress. In one fell swoop, he confirmed Iran's long-standing propaganda about the ties between the Great Satan (the United States) and the Minor Satan (Israel). Second, instead of blaming Iran's fanatical oligarchy, Clinton lumped the Iranian people and its leaders together as "terrorists." Instead of talking about Iranian unity under a different regime, Americans are angering the Iranian people with their calls for the dismemberment of their country.

As things stand now, the negotiations with Russia on calling off the nuclear cooperation with Iran — the first external test of Clinton's new policy — ended in failure or, at best, in partial success. On one hand, domestic Russian power games got mixed up in the issue while, on the other, the Republican Congress was not prepared to hear of paying Russia off for having scrapped the reactors deal.

But domestic politics are not the be-all and end-all. The Clinton administration must answer the question posed by Iran expert Stephen Gruman in a position paper, published by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, entitled: "What Is Iran's Place in U.S. Foreign Policy Priorities?"

If it is true that Iran poses the most serious threat to world peace in the coming decade, as U.S. Administration leaders and spokesmen claim on every possible occasion, a deal should have been offered to Yeltsin whereby NATO's expansion would be put off if he scrapped the deal with Iran. Seeing that the United States cannot affect the behavior of the Russian Army in Chechnya, Clinton could have spared himself a run-in with his host over what Yeltsin perceives as a clear domestic issue. Somebody who fervently wants to see mammoth deals between Tokyo and Tehran canceled does not declare an all-out war on Japan because of its historical refusal to remove trade barriers on imports of Ford spare parts. Somebody who fervently wants France to join the coalition against Iran's Islamic fanatics can-

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not destroy the French coalition against Algeria's fundamentalists.

Even though Russia insists on supplying the reactors and Europe's reaction to the effectiveness of the U.S. embargo has ranged from apathy to disdain, it turns out that the President's announcement was enough to deal a severe blow to Iran's economy. Within two weeks, the rate of exchange dropped from 4,200 rials to 7,000 rials to the U.S. dollar. The annual rate of inflation stands at 120 percent, and the Iranian press reports growing unrest among the Iranian people, who, in the past year, staged numerous riots to protest their economic predicament.

The opportunity to solidify the embargo on Iran and keep it farther away from attaining its nuclear dream will come next month, at the meeting of the seven industrialized countries (plus Russia) in Canada. Halifax may turn into the Oklahoma City of Clinton's foreign policy — his last real chance to rally the world around the United States' leadership against the deranged forces threatening it.

Rabin's 'Impression' U.S. Civilian Aid To Be Cut

TA1805102195 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 18 May 95 pp A1, A2

[Report by Aluf Ben and 'Aqiva Eldar]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the course of his recent visit to the United States, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin got the impression that Israel must prepare itself for a cut in the scope of civilian aid from the United States, albeit not in the upcoming budgetary year.

After meeting leaders from both Houses of Congress, Rabin expressed the assessment that the Senate supported the continuation of present aid levels to Israel but there is increasing pressure from the House of Representatives to effect a cutback. [passage omitted]

The prime minister is deeply opposed to even the smallest cutback or change in the format of U.S. aid. Rabin told the congressmen that the continuation of aid was necessary in order to maintain U.S. influence in the Middle East and help in the struggle against radical Islam. The prime minister asserted that the civilian aid package was earmarked for paying back loans granted to Israel in the past by the United States in order to help finance security needs.

Prime Minister Rabin categorically rejected two compromise proposals which were raised recently:

— Redefining civilian aid as a military grant, cutting it down to $2.7 billion, and guaranteeing this sum in advance for the next five years. Rabin believes that figuring the civilian aid package into the Pentagon's budget would force Israel to compete with the U.S. Army for budgets and undermine security relations with the United States.

— Writing off all or part of Israel's old debts in exchange for the cancellation or proportionate reduction in the scope of civilian aid. Israel currently owes approximately $10 billion: half of the sum to the administration and the other half to commercial banks. The prime minister holds the view that a debt write off would severely affect Israel's international credit rating. [passage omitted]

Ambassador Itamar Rabinovich has sent a cable to Jerusalem noting that two clauses in the Republicans' program had a special significance for Israel: the proposal for an immediate cut in foreign budgets, with the intention of slashing them by 30 percent, which would have considerable ramifications for foreign aid levels and U.S. foreign policy; the freezing of U.S. defense budgets at their present level, contrary to the expectations created by the Republicans following their victory in the congressional elections, according to which defense expenditures would increase.

Rabinovich believes that the Pentagon will have to choose between upholding the U.S. Army's current technological standards or maintaining its present order of battle. The ambassador believes that this argument will be at the top of the public agenda in the United States over the next few weeks. [passage omitted]

Rabin Urges Germany To Contribute Funds to PA

TA1505130595 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 15 May 95 p 2

[Report by Moti Bassok]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin yesterday told Professor Rita Sussmuth, the president of the German Bundestag, that "the donor countries must increase their efforts to help the Palestinian Authority [PA]. Germany can help the Palestinians, for example, by building housing for refugees in the Gaza Strip and Jericho."

In his meeting with Sussmuth, Rabin asserted that economic improvement would help the PA overcome terrorism. In Rabin's view, Sudan, much like Iran, is encouraging radical Islamic terrorism.

Sussmuth noted that she would raise the issue of German aid to the Palestinians before her government.

This question was also discussed at yesterday's cabinet session. Police Minister Moshe Shahal proposed that Israel contribute $200 million to help the PA create jobs. The finance minister and foreign minister reported

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that the Arab countries have failed to meet their commitments to the Palestinians and that their debt now totals $65 million. Saudi Arabia, for example, owes the Palestinians $25 million. Several ministers claimed that it is inconceivable that Israel subsidize the PA, while rich Arab states are not transferring sums they had already promised. Other ministers pointed out that Israel, which is asking for continued military and civilian aid from the United States, cannot permit itself to transfer part of these funds to the PA.

Rabin, Kohl and King Husayn Plan 3-Way Meeting

TA1805101595 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 18 Jun 95 p 2

[Report by David Makovsky]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, Jordan's King Husayn and Germany Prime Minister Helmut Kohl will hold a three-way meeting at a northern spot along the Jordan-Israel border on June 5, officials in the Prime Minister's Office said.

The plan is to have a session at Naharayyim after Kohl's visit to Amman, so as to underscore the commitment of Germany to help finance the construction of a nearby dam that would alleviate Jordan's water shortage.

Kohl is expected to begin his Middle East swing in Egypt on June 2, before continuing on to Jordan. Afterwards, he will arrive here for his first visit to Israel in 11 years.

Aide's Alleged 'Secret' Visit to Qatar Reported

TA1605100695 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 16 May 95 p 5

[Report by Hemi Shalev]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Avi Gil, director of the Foreign Minister's Bureau, will return today from a secret visit to Qatar where he discussed the upcoming visit of Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres with the local authorities.

The Foreign Ministry tried to conceal Gil's trip to Qatar, saying he had flown to Germany over the weekend to discuss German financing for projects related to the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty, particularly the dams slated to be built on the Jordan River. [passage omitted]

Jerusalem attaches great importance to Peres' upcoming visit to Qatar due to the recent slowdown in normalization with the Arab countries in general, and the Gulf countries in particular.

The Qatari authorities canceled a previous visit by Peres due to early publicity. Officials in Jerusalem hope the case will not recur this time.

'Regional Forces' Blamed for Slow Progress With Gulf States

TA1805101095 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 18 May 95 p 1

[Report by David Makovsky]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Qatar has informed a visiting Israeli diplomat that it cannot make major strides in the relationship between the two countries due to the current regional environment, a diplomat in Jerusalem said.

The head of Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres's bureau, Avi Gil, made a quiet visit to Qatar earlier this week. It is believed that he discussed both the prospects of a visit by Peres and establishing a modicum of diplomatic or economic relations.

"One cannot expect Israeli-Qatari relations to go forward in isolation from what else is going on in the region, namely no movement on the Palestinian issue, no movement on the Syrian issue and, on top of all that, land expropriation in Jerusalem," the diplomat said.

The lack of progress with Qatar reflects the fact that the normalization between Israel and countries in North Africa and the Gulf have also lost their steam due to the same negative regional forces. [passage omitted]

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Parliament Condemns Israeli Land Confiscation

JN1705175195 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The House of Representatives held a meeting at the Photo Gallery in Parliament at noon today. The meeting was chaired by Engineer Sa'd Hayil al-Surur, the house speaker; and was attended by 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al-Rawabidah, deputy prime minister and minister of education; and 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, foreign minister.

The meeting discussed the recent Israeli confiscation of land in the Jerusalem area and the excavations under Islamic shrines in the holy city.

At the end of the meeting, the House issued the following statement read by its speaker:

[Begin al-Surur recording] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The House of Representatives has interrupted its parliamentary recess to hold an extraordinary meeting in the wake of the dangerous developments in the Israeli position on Jerusalem in the form of land confiscation and the continued excavations aimed to wreck and destroy the shrines that are holy to hundreds of millions of Muslims and Christians.

The representatives of the Jordanian people express their anger and denunciation of these measures which represent an Israeli policy that undermines the principles of the Madrid peace conference that obliged the participants not to encroach on the Jerusalem situation before the second and final stage of direct negotiations between the parties concerned.

The House of Representatives emphasizes anew that holy Jerusalem is an Arab and Islamic city and will remain so, and no Arab or Muslim can cede Arab Jerusalem to the settlers who are brought in at the expense of the Arab people of Palestine. The Israeli measure shows contempt for 18 resolutions adopted by the United Nations on Jerusalem and for the feelings and rights of all Muslims and Christians. This measure also ignores the firm European position on Jerusalem and is a blatant violation of the Oslo agreement Israel signed with the Palestinians.

We strongly blame the renewed attempts by the U.S. Congress to appease the Zionist voters in the United States through a draft law to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem regardless of the effects of such a proposal on the peace process and U.S. credibility.

This House hails the honorable position of the European Union and the wise and responsible stance it voiced which should be met with respect and appreciation. The Arab, Islamic, and nonaligned countries are urged to adopt a position that is up to the level of this grave development. We urge these countries and their political and democratic organs to express their anger and resentment and to denounce the measure so that Israel will stop its irresponsible tampering and disregard. This tampering endangers the entire peace process and the post-peace achievements, and requires the Arab parties, individually and collectively, to work in a different way and to coordinate their positions to rise to the level of these dangerous threats to Arab and Islamic heritage in holy Jerusalem. Israel should immediately stop encroachment on the holy places and rescind the decision to confiscate Arab land in Jerusalem if it is serious and sincere about proceeding toward a comprehensive, durable peace.

The Jordanian House of Representatives, aware of the extent of anger and denunciation in the hearts of Muslims and Christians everywhere, urges the U.S. Administration to resort to justice in its capacity as the neutral peace sponsor who is not biased toward the Israeli greed for the Arab and Islamic holy places. [end recording]

Deputies Express 'Indignation'

JN1805095995 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 18 May 95 pp 1, 24

[Report by Hamdan al-Hajj]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jordanian deputies have expressed their indignation against and condemnation of the recent developments in the Israeli position vis-a-vis the confiscation of lands and continuation of excavations that will cause the religious places [in Jerusalem], holy to hundreds of millions of Muslims and Christians, to collapse and cease to exist.

The House of Representatives held an extraordinary meeting on Wednesday [17 May] morning under House Speaker Engineer Sa'd Hayil al-Surur. The meeting was attended by 60 deputies, including ministers who are members of the House. The deputies considered the Israeli measures an encroachment on the principles of the Madrid conference, which committed all parties involved not to affect the status of Jerusalem before the second and final stage of direct negotiations among the parties concerned. [passage omitted]

Remarks made by the deputies, who represented the various shades of the Jordanian political spectrum, centered on the need to freeze or abrogate the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, summon the Jordanian ambassador in Tel Aviv, and expel the Israeli ambassador and close the Israeli Embassy until Israel cancels its decision and recognizes Jerusalem as an Arab city and the

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capital of the independent Palestinian state. Deputies also called for turning down draft resolutions on lifting the Jordanian boycott of Israel and the ban on trade dealing with it, and rejecting all measures related to normalization with Israel. These draft resolutions will be referred to the House of Representatives to be debated in the forthcoming extraordinary session. Some deputies called for withdrawal from all bilateral and multilateral talks committees involving Jordan and Israel.

The deputies called on Arabs and Arab and world parliaments, especially the European Parliament, to adopt firm stands on this. They also called for convening an emergency meeting of the Union of Arab Parliaments in Amman expeditiously. However, one deputy argued: We should not hide behind such parliaments because they will do nothing.

Deputies also called for convening an urgent Arab summit meeting to remove the causes of difference and disagreement among Arab countries and to debate the issue of Jerusalem and the Israeli measures there with the highest degree of seriousness. They also said it is necessary to be familiar with the U.S. position, which some deputies described as stringent vis-a-vis Palestine, Iraq, Iran, and Bosnia, and as lax, inattentive, and permissive toward Israel.

Some deputies argued that Israel takes what it wishes while Arabs do not take what they want, but rather give and never take anything in return. A deputy warned: The next salvo of land confiscation will be 1350 donums. What will remain to Arabs of Jerusalem is only 4 percent.

Other deputies said that there can be no confidence in Jews and called for halting the entry of [Israelis] for tourism, which, they maintained, is an access and cover for Israeli espionage activity in the region. Some deputies called for freezing negotiations and official contacts on all levels with Israel. Some deputies criticized the condemnation and denunciation statements which, they argued, are worthless. Other deputies highly regarded the position of the Jordanian Government as expressed by the foreign minister. They also praised the high-profile role Jordan has played thus far, despite its delicate situation, given the fact that the treaty was signed only recently and given the pressures applied on Jordan. Some deputies called for excluding the draft resolutions related to normalization and lifting the boycott of Israel from the royal decree and, thus, from the agenda of the upcoming extraordinary session. A number of deputies threatened to draw back confidence from the government if the latter failed to respond favorably to the deputies' remarks and recommendations. They demanded that the government should stop chasing campaigns under the pretext of security.

Some deputies argued: What is going on in Jerusalem now is not a new thing; it has been continuous since 1967. The new thing about it is the fact that it came after peace. A group of deputies called on peoples to assume their role seriously in light of the upcoming Jewish dangers. The group called on the government to state a frank position and halt participation in the meetings of all joint committees with Israel.

Other deputies cautioned against an ever increasing popular indignation resulting from normalization and the economic conditions. They noted that national anti-peace process sentiments have been on the rise more than ever. Some deputies called for giving people and deputies access to the official mass media in order to express their opinions. Some deputies noted that the Christian and Catholic pressure on Israel were fruitful when Israel reversed a decision it made earlier to confiscate lands belonging to the Catholic church.

Others questioned the stand of the Palestinian leadership and the coordination between the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] and Jordan. They asked whether the PNA will freeze the Oslo agreement signed with Israel. They added: "Will the visit of President Yasir 'Arafat to Amman next week be a chance for resuming and boosting coordination between the two sides?" Some deputies contended that the entire peace process is in danger.

Suspension of Israeli Ties Urged

JN1705164995 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1515 GMT 17 May 95

[From the "With the Events" feature by Sha'ul Menashe]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Jordanian House of Representatives met today to discuss land expropriations in Jerusalem. Almost 60 out of 80 deputies urged the government to suspend its ties with Israel and recall the Jordanian ambassador from Israel to protest Israel's land expropriations. Moreover, the deputies demanded a suspension in the normalization of Jordanian-Israeli ties. They also asked that the measures to revoke the Israel boycott laws be halted.

For his part, Jordanian Foreign Affairs Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti answered the Jordanian deputies, saying that the government will seriously examine their position. However, he added that their demands are not binding on the government from a legal point of view. [passage omitted]

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King Reaffirms Jerusalem Stand, Backs Summit Plan

JN1705171695 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty King Husayn visited the Prime Ministry at noon today and met for some time with His Excellency Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir. His majesty was briefed on efforts made by the government on various issues and developments in the region, particularly Jerusalem.

King Husayn reaffirmed that Jordan's stand vis-a-vis Jerusalem is clear and principled. He said: We do not shoulder direct responsibility, but we have a moral responsibility. We will do our utmost, together with our brothers.

His majesty added: Our stand is supportive, keen, and concerned over these developments. We hope that satisfactory solutions to this problem will be reached. He said: Jordan has always supported any Arab meeting that might support Arab common interests, particularly since there are many important issues that need to be debated at summit level in a frank atmosphere.

Following the cabinet meeting, his majesty answered journalists' questions:

[Begin recording] [Correspondent] Your Majesty, immediately after your return from your long journey you visited the Prime Ministry to issue your instructions [words indistinct]?

[Husayn] No, sir. It was just a visit to be briefed by his excellency the prime minister on the situation during this period and to acquaint him with what was achieved during my many contacts with officials in the world during my visit to Britain and to the United States, although it was a private visit.

[Correspondent] Would you, sir, tell us about your future moves and meetings? You are scheduled to meet with the German chancellor and President 'Arafat.

[Husayn] We are expecting the German chancellor to visit the region in the very near future. He will begin his tour with a visit to Jordan. He is a great friend; and we have strong relations with Germany. I believe that this visit is very important and I hope it will yield fruitful results. The visit will also prepare for the conference which will convene [in Amman] at the end of this year, God willing.

Our stand vis-a-vis Jerusalem, the Arab territory in Jerusalem, and the rights of our kinsfolk and brothers is known. We always underscore this stand. We do not shoulder direct responsibility, but we have a moral one. We will do our utmost together with our brothers. Basically, we support the Palestinian leadership, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian Arab people, which — supported by its people and the Arab and Islamic nation — opted for assuming its responsibilities. Our stand is supportive, keen, and concerned over these developments. We ask God that satisfactory solutions to this problem be reached.

[Correspondent] What do you say, your majesty, regarding the call for convening a mini Arab summit?

[Husayn] We attended most of the Arab summits and we called many times for convening summits. Many issues should be discussed at summit level in an atmosphere of frankness and fraternity if we want our nation to wake up from its slumber. God willing, God willing. [end recording]

His majesty was received at the Prime Ministry by His Excellency al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, prime minister; Dr. Khalid al-Karaki, deputy prime minister and information minister; Ibrahim 'Izz-al-Din, minister of state for cabinet affairs; Sa'd-al-Din Jum'ah, secretary general of the Prime Ministry.

Supports Palestinian Rights

JN1705140495 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Majesty King Husayn and Her Majesty Queen Nur this morning returned home in God's care and protection following visits to the United Kingdom and the United States. His Majesty King Husayn spoke to journalists.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent] Sir, does your participation in the 50th anniversary celebrations marking the end of World War II have a certain significance for your majesty, especially since you are making peace in the Middle East?

[King Husayn] Certainly, this participation was very significant because the family to which I belong played a great role during this century in leading the Arabs, first toward liberation, unity, freedom, and decent life through the Great Arab Revolt which coincided with World War I.

Consequently, Jordan and the entire Arab nation were part of the team that stood alongside the allies against the opposite forces. In World War II, and in the face of injustice and repression, the leader of this country's march was the first, after Britain, to declare war against the axis states.

There is a great deal of appreciation for this country and for its people, Armed Forces, and past role. Celebrations were held on the 50th anniversary, and this world has

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advanced and has not thus far witnessed catastrophes like those which it experienced in the past. We were invited, and we were there as part of the invitees and of the hope for a promising future which will bring good, peace, man's respect for fellow men, and much good for this region in particular, God willing.

[Correspondent] Your Majesty: Some Arab states, along with the Arab League, have called for an Arab summit on Jerusalem. What is your view, if any, in this regard?

[Husayn] Sir, our position is clear on Jerusalem and the rights of our kinsfolk and brothers on their national soil, particularly in Jerusalem, as well as regarding the significance of Jerusalem and what it stands for.

We are always with our Arab brothers, so we are with their meeting if they wish to meet. Under all circumstances, we have been, and we will continue to be with them. We even call for such meetings. In fact, I am not in the picture regarding all details. However, Jordan will not be late and will not fail to play its role and carry out its duty in terms of saying its word and doing what it can in order to support the Palestinian Arab people on their national soil and achieve their rights to the best of our abilities. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Immediately after his return home, His Majesty King Husayn visited the Prime Ministry at noon today. He was received by His Excellency Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, the two deputy prime ministers, the minister of state for cabinet affairs, and the prime ministry's secretary general. His majesty met for some time with His Excellency Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir.

Al-Kabariti Warns U.S. Against Land Resolution Veto

JN1705185195 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti has stated that Jordan's position on the confiscation of Arab land in holy Jerusalem is firm, clear, and unchangeable — a position which we have expressed honestly and frankly.

In a statement to journalists following the deputies' meeting today to discuss the confiscation of Arab land in East Jerusalem, he said there is no conflict between the official and popular positions toward this important issue. He also said that Jordan's role alone remains ineffective and that an Arab and Islamic position on all levels is required to press Israel to rescind its decision. He pointed out that coordination with the Egyptian and Palestinian brothers on this issue is taking place at the highest level.

The foreign minister also said that the issue of holding a mini or an ordinary Arab summit is being studied and that the Arab League secretary general, now in Morocco, is holding intensive contacts in this regard. He expressed the Jordanian Government's appreciation for the European position, which he described as honorable. He stressed that the Jordanian Government does not have any information about the U.S. position on the amended draft resolution, which will be presented to the UN Security Council. He also expressed his hope that the United States will not veto the draft resolution because such a move will harm the peace process, conflict with the U.S. role as a sponsor of the peace process, and damage U.S. credibility.

Replying to a question on the overall position in Israel toward the Israeli cabinet decision to confiscate Arab land in East Jerusalem, al-Kabariti said that Israel's goals are declared and expressed by Israeli governments and parties. This, he said, is unacceptable and conflicts with the spirit of peace, the principles of the Madrid conference, and the letters of invitation extended to concerned parties to attend the Madrid conference. He added that international legitimacy is required to apply its criteria, stipulated in its principles regarding the confiscation of Arab land, and to use one standard in harmony with the role it had played in similar issues throughout the world.

Meets Foreign Envoys on Issue

JN1605170895 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1600 GMT 16 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti has held separate meetings with the ambassadors of France, India, and Pakistan.

Talks with the French ambassador dealt with Israeli measures in Jerusalem and proposals by France, which currently chairs the Security Council and the European Community, asking Israel to rescind its decision to confiscate Arab land in East Jerusalem. Mr. al-Kabariti expressed Jordan's appreciation of the European clear position and said the Israeli measures could destroy the whole peace process.

Meanwhile, the Pakistani ambassador delivered a message from Pakistan's foreign minister to Mr. al-Kabariti on the issues of Jerusalem and Kashmir.

In his meeting with the Indian ambassador, the foreign minister discussed bilateral relations and means to bolster them particularly in the fields of industry and trade. Talks also dealt with Israeli measures in Jerusalem and the situation in Kashmir.

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U.S. Backing of Israeli Confiscation 'Criminal'

JN1805081095 Amman THE STAR in English 18-24 May 95 p 4

[Editorial: "America's Complicity in a Crime"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Israel's insistence to go ahead with its plan to confiscate more than 500 donums of land in Arab East Jerusalem should not surprise us. Illegal as it is, the seizure is but a carefully planned scheme to expropriate Arab land and replace Jerusalem's Arab residents with Jewish immigrants and change forever the character and identity of the Holy city. What should surprise us, however, is America's complete and outrageous complicity in this international crime.

The Clinton administration has all but blessed the confiscation. It has blocked Arab attempts to recruit Security Council efforts to condemn Israel's act and by doing so afforded the Rabin government the political backing it needed to carry out its latest aggression in the occupied city.

America's position, graphically illustrated by its UN envoy Madeleine Albright, is not only anti-Arab and anti-Muslim, but is as criminal as the Israeli conspiracy.

The confiscation is a flagrant violation of international laws, the Geneva Conventions and the Security Council resolutions. It breaches the spirit and letter of the Middle East peace conference and the ensuing peace agreements and accords between Israel and its former Arab foes. It sets dangerous precedents, and challenges the authority of the world's highest legal bodies.

The U.S. official position is made even worse by the statements of leading congressional leaders as they file up to show support for Israel in their attempt to win vital Jewish votes in the forthcoming U.S. presidential elections. The disregard for the political consequences of such statements, including the one promising to relocate the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, reflects a scandalous indifference to U.S. interests in the Middle East.

By siding with Israel on the Jerusalem issue, before talks on the final status of Jerusalem could even begin, the United States is openly challenging the feelings and convictions of over one billion Muslims. Such an attitude contradicts the U.S. official policy of reconciling its relations with the Muslim world. It puts the American people on a direct collision course with Arabs and Muslims everywhere.

We see no real value for the so-called U.S. strategic interests in adopting such a stand—other than serving domestic electoral ends of presidential hopefuls. Such political myopia endangers the Middle East peace process, and the promise to create a comprehensive political settlement in the region. Furthermore, the current developments will almost certainly derail Israel's own attempts to be recognized by its neighbors in a new Middle East.

The U.S. must understand that the conflict over Jerusalem is not one between Palestinians and Israelis, where it is too easy to take sides. Jerusalem is a Muslim issue and while Israel's attempts to Judaize the city appear to be going unobstructed today, the Arab and Muslim worlds cannot be expected to make a final death-throe before succumbing to a new status quo. This, for one, is not a decision for any Arab or Muslim leader to make. It is not a concession that any leadership could offer or be forced to acquiesce.

Daily Urges Efforts To Halt Land Confiscation

JN1805113495 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 18 May 95 p 1

[Editorial: "The Clear Jordanian Position on the Jerusalem Issue"]

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty King Husayn yesterday underscored the clear, well known, and principled Jordanian position on the issue of Jerusalem. This position has supported Palestinian rights in Jerusalem, an integral part of the Arab territories occupied in 1967 and a key part of the resolutions of international legitimacy represented by Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

His majesty stressed Jordan's eagerness to take part, along with the Arab brethren, in any meeting seeking to protect higher Arab interests. He also confirmed that Jordan will never shirk its role or duty in stating its position and doing its utmost to support the Arab Palestinian people's attainment of their rights on their national soil.

King Husayn also voiced the kingdom's apprehension at the developments in Jerusalem. His majesty expressed both the official and popular position, which are identical, toward the repercussions of the Israeli measures to confiscate Arab lands in the holy city. The same position was expressed by the foreign minister and the people's representatives yesterday.

The kingdom cannot sit on its hands while it watches the measures of the Israeli occupation authorities in holy Jerusalem — measures that threaten what has been accomplished so far as part of the peace process in the region.

Genuine care for peace in the region behooves the United States and the Russian Federation — as cosponsors of the peace process, the European Union, and all

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forces interested in the victory of peace in the region to stop at nothing in order to oblige Israel to halt its serious policy in Jerusalem and rescind its decision to confiscate Arab lands there. This will help the peace process move forward swiftly.

The Israeli disregard for the feelings of all Arabs and Muslims will never serve the cause of peace.

Gingrich 'Way Off Course' on Embassy Relocation

JN1705164295 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 17 May 95 p 6

[Editorial: "Gingrich Going Astray"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, Newt Gingrich, had some harsh words to say about the Arab reaction to plans to move the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. In a speech to the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), Mr. Gingrich lambasted the Arab World for not blessing a proposal to transfer his country's embassy to the Holy City and called on the Arab Nation to "grow up." To show that Mr. Gingrich and like-minded people are way off course on the issue, the speaker had these words to say to complement his attack on the Arabs: "We need to send a simple signal to the Middle East," Mr. Gingrich told his audience in Washington, "that the dominant power on the planet, the leader of the world, is committed unequivocally to the survival of Israel."

With all due appreciation of the American prowess, we fail to understand the connection between the survival of Israel and the policy that attempts to bestow legitimacy on Israel's illegal annexation of the occupied city. If Gingrich and his supporters are genuinely concerned about Israel's well-being and security, they must counsel it to act prudently, lawfully and wisely so that it can be accepted by all the countries of the area as a peaceful neighbour which is not bent on the annexation of Arab lands or exercising hegemony over the Arab World. The issue here, therefore, is not the fate of Israel which by all accounts seems to be secure. What is at stake is the survival of the peace process and viability of the peace agreement signed between Israel and the Arab parties. Acts of aggression in any form obviously are anathema to peace in the region. Confiscation of Arab lands in a manner contrary to international law, especially the Fourth Geneva Convention, is certainly an act of aggression that cannot and should not be rewarded. Mr. Gingrich, of all people, should be aware of this fact. To argue that frustrating Israel's plans to convert Jerusalem into a strictly Jewish city at the expense of its indigenous Arab population and in violation of international norms is threatening to the security and stability of the Jewish state is something that Arabs cannot comprehend and will not accept. Israel's survival can be best secured in a climate of regional peace. Without a just and comprehensive peace in the area, Israel's survival would be threatened and not advanced. Perhaps all those who are trigger happy about the issue of Jerusalem should reconsider their stance for the sake of Israel itself if not for the sake of the entire region.

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Hizballah on State Department Report on 'Terror'

NC1705170795 Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 5 May 95 p 15

[FBIS Translated Text] Reacting to the U.S. State Department's report on international terrorism, an official source in Hizballah has stated the following:

It seems the United States is not content with the satanic role it has been playing internationally. The United States has been releasing annual reports containing all kinds of charges against and classification of countries and nations. Could a state known for its role in harboring organized terrorism be entitled to classify as terrorists all those who are seeking freedom and defending their presence and right to live in dignity? U.S. conspiracies, as well as its weapons and bombs, which have been used by its ally Israel, have inflicted wounds, caused pain, and filled 50 years of our history with blood, displacement, and despair.

Does this not make it very clear that the world order should now be named the order that serves the interests of the United States and its allies? Is it not inconsistent that the United States should sometimes employ international laws and organizations in favor of its policies against the small and oppressed nations and obstruct these laws and organizations at other times?

Is it not also inconsistent that the United States should use force to implement some international resolutions and later obstruct the implementation of these resolutions if they concern Israel? Is it not inconsistent that the United States, the leader of democracy, as it claims, should help dictatorial and undemocratic regimes persecute their nations and confiscate human rights there?

We loudly declare that we are not embarrassed to publicly announce our enmity for the United States. We even believe that our dispute with it is a yardstick for freedom. Its classifications, standards, and reports do not concern us and do not concern our people.

The U.S. State Department's report, which incites against Hizballah in Lebanon and contains distorted and baseless facts, will achieve nothing and will deceive no one, because our Lebanese society is more vigilant and more aware of the facts. More than at any other time our society now harbors deep sympathy toward the resistance and fighters who are using every effort ahead of the holy battle of liberation and working to consolidate and stabilize the components of domestic peace in Lebanon.

Junblatt on Moscow Trip, al-Hirawi Extension

MM1705090795 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 16 May 95 pp 1, 6

[Interview with Walid Junblatt, refugee affairs minister and leader of the Progressive Socialist Party, by Jalal al- Mashtah in Moscow "yesterday"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [al-Mashtah] What are the aims of your visit to Moscow, and with whom have you met?

[Junblatt] The visit is in response to an invitation from the Russian Defense Ministry to attend the celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of victory. During the visit I met with Defense Ministry officials and Yuriy Baturin, adviser to the Russian president for national security affairs. And we held talks with Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Posuvalyuk. We also held talks and engaged in activities concerning developing tourism between the two countries.

[Al-Mashtah] Was the Chechnya issue raised at the talks?

[Junblatt] We expressed our hope that the issue would be resolved peacefully. We also spoke about the Yugoslav problem, stressing the need to propose a solution before this problem leads to a new cold war. [passage omitted]

[Al-Mashtah] Extending President al-Hirawi's term has become the main issue on the Lebanese scene. Have you defined a position in this connection?

[Junblatt] We have already expressed our view. We want to have a look at the president's political and economic program to enable our party to take a position. There have been achievements during al-Hirawi's term in office, and we want to ease the burdens suffered by the poor and middle classes.

[Al-Mashtah] What is your opinion of the possible nomination of General Emile Lahhud?

[Junblatt] We do not want a "neo-Shihabism." Previous eras ended with the politicians' unanimous opposition to indirect Army rule. [passage omitted]

[Al-Mashtah] The Middle East peace process is faltering, and Yasir 'Arafat has acknowledged the existence of gaps in the Oslo agreement...

[Junblatt] All parties — with the exception of Syria — have departed from the Madrid course. Basically, the Israelis and 'Arafat's acknowledgment came after it was too late. What is going to happen is that they [Israelis] will offer him "Gaza or nothing."

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Radio Reports U.S. Veto of Confiscation Resolution

JN1805074395 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] New York — The United States late last night used the veto against the UN Security Council resolution which calls on Israel to cancel its confiscation of Arab land in the eastern part of occupied Jerusalem. With the exception of the United States, all the other 14 members voted for the resolution.

This U.S. veto is the first since 31 May 1990 when Washington vetoed a draft resolution calling on a fact-finding mission to prepare a report on the violation of Palestinians rights in the occupied Arab territory.

Envoy Discusses Minisummit, Denies Secret Meetings

NC1705191295 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 17 May 95

[Telephone interview with Ambassador to Iran Ahmad al-Hasan by Jihad al-'Idan, in Tehran; date not given; from the "News and Reports" feature—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-'Idan] Arab efforts are under way to hold an Arab minisummit to discuss the Judaization of Jerusalem. What is Syria's view on these efforts and on the situation in Jerusalem?

[Al-Hasan] These efforts began after the Israeli occupation authorities expropriated over 50 hectares of Palestinian land to build Jewish settlements. The Arab League called for an emergency meeting. The issue is also being discussed by the UN Security Council to adopt a resolution condemning the Israeli occupation authorities' measures. These measures threaten to ruin the peace process, particularly if Israel remains intransigent and persists in this action. As normal in such circumstances, efforts are being made to hold a minisummit of the Jerusalem Committee's member states to discuss the expropriation and the measures that can be taken. So far there have been no signs that the minisummit will be held. But efforts are being made. We welcome and back any united Arab effort to confront what the Israeli occupation authorities are doing. We hope for a united Arab stance on this.

[Al-'Idan] Your Excellency, the British press has alleged that a meeting was held between Bashshar al-Asad and Zionist officials. It is strange that the Zionist entity hastened to deny this meeting. What is your comment on these press reports?

[Al-Hasan] Of course such allegations are false, devoid of any truth. Syria has always declared its position that there will be no secret talks or meetings between any Syrian and Israeli officials. Syria has no secrets to discuss clandestinely. It has a just cause. Syria bases its position on the need for Israel to implement UN Security Council resolutions in connection with the establishment of peace and a full Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories. For this reason tendentious parties spread such reports. The reports are untrue. Syria has denied this.

[Al-'Idan] Your Excellency, do you think Israel is behind these rumors?

[Al-Hasan] Perhaps this is part of the Zionist propaganda. Israel constantly advocates secret negotiations, saying they are necessary with Syria, along the same lines as the negotiations with the PLO and Jordan. Syria so far totally opposes such secret negotiations. Occasionally Zionism tries to spread false news to give the impression that Syria wishes to hold clandestine talks with Israel. Syria, as I said at the beginning, has a clear, open position. It sees no need for clandestine action on a just cause that is rooted in international legality and UN resolutions.

[Al-'Idan] Thank you very much, Ambassador.

[Al-Hasan] Thanks to you.

Ba'th Official Considers Peace 'Strategic Option'

JN1705204495 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1815 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Comrade 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party [ASBP], today met with the participants in the central party indoctrination course at the Higher Institute for Political Science. The meeting was attended by the comrades, the chief of the Cultural and Party Indoctrination Office in the ASBP National Command, the dean of the Higher Institute for Political Science, the supervisors of the course, and the members of the teaching staff.

At the beginning of the meeting, Comrade al-Ahmar conveyed the greetings and love of struggler Comrade Hafiz al-Asad, secretary general of the ASBP and president of the republic. He then reviewed the struggle of the ASBP and its effective and rejuvenating role in leading the society and state, as well as its achievements on the path of building a new society which will safeguard citizens' dignity and strengthen Syria's role and influence. [passage omitted]

Comrade al-Ahmar then discussed the current developments in the world and the international changes and their effect on the causes of nations, particularly on the Arab causes. He dealt with the developments in the peace process, which Syria considers the way to achieve

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a just and comprehensive peace on the basis of international legitimacy resolutions.

Comrade al-Ahmar noted that Syria, under leader President Hafiz al-Asad, considers peace its strategic option, adding that Syria is determined to do its utmost to achieve the objectives of this process. He said that the obstacles in this process are caused by Israel's intransigent stands, its failure to implement the Security Council resolutions, and its rejection of the principle of equality [musawah] and equitability [takafu'] in the security arrangements. He said that Syria cannot relinquish, cede, or bargain over any inch of land or any right, adding that peace cannot be achieved if Israel does not fully withdraw from the Golan to the 4 June 1967 border and from southern Lebanon, if it does not achieve the interests and rights of all parties, and if it is not just and comprehensive. This is because genuine peace is the peace which can survive, and such peace cannot be achieved without Syria, al-Ahmar said.

Press Cited on 'Correct' Peace Stand, Rabin Remarks

JN1805110795 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0455 GMT 18 May 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In an editorial on Syria's sincere and constructive stand in the peace process, TISHRIN says: Syria has continued to reiterate its adherence to the peace process and its great eagerness to reach a just and comprehensive peace in the region, ushering in an era of safety and stability and ending the state of trouble, tension, and turmoil.

TISHRIN adds: The entire world has been a witness to Syria's credibility and correct position. Syria has stated and announced that peace is its strategic option. It has exerted its utmost and adhered to any positive and constructive endeavor to end the state of stagnation and to promote the Washington talks.

TISHRIN concludes by saying: Peace is a sacred duty whose basis cannot be tampered with. The principles of peace should not be changed or deviated from their path. Israel's neglect of the principles of peace will further compound the complicated situation and perhaps threaten the peace process with disintegration and failure.

The newspaper AL-BA'TH comments on Israeli Prime minister Yitzhaq Rabin's remarks and his threats to stop the negotiations if Syria adheres to the principle of equality [al-musawah] within the framework of security arrangements. The newspaper says that Rabin does not accept geographic equality in security and frankly states that he wants security, land, and peace altogether, and that negotiations could stop if he does not obtain all this.

AL-BA'TH was not surprised by these remarks, saying that this logic has ruled the Israeli mentality and its attitude toward the peace process from the beginning. Dictating terms, denying the rights of others, and ignoring the legitimate resolutions and the negotiations that are based on the principles of equality, equitability, and balance [al-musawah, al-takafu', wa al-tawazun], are the components of the Israeli logic which has been preventing any progress in the peace process. This Israeli logic is arrogantly and brazenly threatening to bring this process to a halt if the others do not respond to the Israeli dictates and submit to this aggressive logic.

The newspaper says that Rabin did not go to Washington earlier this month out of his eagerness to activate and resume the negotiations, but in order to make the U.S. Administration move entirely to the Israeli trench and speak in the very same language used by the Israeli rulers concerning the peace process in the region.

AL-BA'TH warns that if the U.S. Administration agrees to abandon its independent policy, it will lose its role as a sponsor of the peace process, forfeit its initiative, and forgo its position as an honest and just broker and a neutral partner.

AL-THAWRAH says that bridging the gaps between the Syrian and Israeli stand depends only on Israel and on nobody else. Syria has given all it can to promote the peace process and preserve its momentum and continuity. Therefore, Israel is supposed to give practical and tangible proofs to convince Syria and the international community of its peace claims and reassures them that it has abandoned the policy of hegemony and expansion and that it now, really and not by words, wants just and comprehensive peace based on the principles of justice and right, peace that preserves the rights, interests, and dignity of all concerned.

AL-THAWRAH says that Israel's adherence to the principle of peace means first and foremost its full withdrawal from the occupied Syrian Golan and from southern Lebanon.

Radio Calls Current Israeli Stand 'Grave Mistake'

JN1705153195 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 17 May 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear listeners: It has become certain that the peace process cannot achieve its goals unless Israel carries out a total withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories to the 4 June 1967 borderlines, and accepts equal [mutasawyah] and balanced

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[mutawazinah] security arrangements on both sides of the border following total withdrawal from the Golan.

There is no doubt that the international community, particularly the United States, is also responsible for making the peace process successful. Israeli conditions and rejection of the bases of the peace process are threatening the situation in the region and may destroy current efforts and lead to grave consequences for which Israel alone will be responsible.

While making continuous efforts to place the peace process on the right track, Syria stresses its eagerness to reach just and comprehensive peace that will regain everyone's rights and enable the Arabs to regain and safeguard their rights. But Israel is creating obstacles by refusing to return to the 4 June 1967 lines and by trying to make gains at the expense of the Arabs' rights and territories.

By renewing its adherence to the occupied territories and refusing to respond to the bases, principles, and factors of international legitimacy, Israel is revealing its objection to the desired peace and showing that it is still far from a commitment to UN and Security Council resolutions that oppose continued occupation.

It has become clear to the international community that Syria is eager to achieve just and comprehensive peace and, at the same time, to regain its occupied territories without relinquishing any of its national and pan-Arab rights. Israel will be making a grave mistake if it maintains its proposals and will be making an even graver mistake if it believes that it can make Syria accept what it does not want or what conflicts with the factors and requirements of the peace process, whose features and tracks were defined by the Madrid conference, the land-for-peace principle, and Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425.

Syria is not afraid of sticking to its rights, nor does it conceal anything. Its position is clear and is based on the resolutions of the international community calling for an end to occupation, injustice, and the disasters and tragedies that the Israeli occupation has caused.

Russian Visitor Appeals Against Obstacles to Peace

JN1805080395 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus — Ramazan Abdulatipov, deputy chairman of the Russian Federation Council, has praised the Syrian leadership's important and considerable role in establishing just and comprehensive peace in this sensitive region of the world. Speaking at a news conference last night attended by the Russian ambassador in Damascus and a number of foreign and Arab reporters and media representatives, Abdulatipov said that as one of the cosponsors of the peace process, Russia has worked and will continue to work in the future to activate this process to realize comprehensive peace. He appealed against placing obstacles in the path of peace if the desire to move forward becomes apparent, alluding to Israel's recent confiscation of Arab land in Jerusalem.

Abdulatipov described his visit to Syria and his talks with Syrian officials and parliamentarians as successful, fruitful, and constructive and added that the visit will contribute toward developing and strengthening ties between the two countries' parliaments and peoples. He said: We did not feel as if we were strangers in Syria, our friend, neighbor, and partner with whom we are linked by traditional and historical relations that must be supported and strengthened to realize joint progress and benefits.

Abdulatipov emphasized the need to strengthen the parliamentary relations between his country and the Arab countries and stressed the need to activate ties between Russia and these countries in all fields because the current level of relations is not commensurate with the historical ties that have existed in the past.

Abdulatipov then answered reporters questions on the Russian Parliament's role at home and abroad and his country's relations with the Arab countries and a number of other countries.

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Afghanistan

Tajikistan Parties Prepare for Talks in Kabul

Delegations Arrive; Goals Outlined

LD1405183395 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 14 May 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A high-ranking working Tajik Government delegation led by Deputy Foreign Minister Erkin Rakhmatulloyev this morning arrived in Kabul to prepare the ground for talks with the Tajik opposition. [passage omitted]

A BAKHTAR correspondent reports that the Tajik Government delegation comprises 12 members and includes the minister of security, a [word indistinct] adviser to the president, and a number of high-ranking officials of the Republic.

The delegation is commissioned to prepare the ground for direct talks between Tajik President Emomali Rakhmanov and the Tajik opposition.

According to another report, the Tajik opposition delegation, which includes esteemed Haji Akbar Turajonzoda, esteemed (Sharif Hematzoda), and esteemed (Rasul) yesterday afternoon arrived in Kabul to take part in the talks. [passage omitted] The delegations of the Tajik Government and the opposition are expected to hold talks in Kabul in order to resolve their problems.

The high-ranking Tajik Government delegation this morning met Afghan authorities. BAKHTAR reports that at the meeting esteemed Dr. Abdorrahman, minister of civil aviation and tourism, headed the Afghan side and esteemed Erkin Rakhmatulloyev, deputy foreign minister of Tajikistan, headed the Tajik Government side. At the meeting views were exchanged on preparing the ground for talks with the Tajik opposition.

The meeting was also attended by a number of Afghan Government officials, including esteemed Deputy Foreign Minister Abdol Rahim Ghafurzay, and from the Tajik Government side by Minister of Security Saidamir Zukhurov, and other members of the high-ranking Tajik delegation.

According to another report, the Tajik opposition delegation led by Haji Akbar Turajonzoda this afternoon met esteemed Dr. Abdorrahman, minister of civil aviation and tourism. At the meeting, which was also attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Abdol Rahim Ghafurzay, and esteemed Abdol Aziz Murad, head of the presidential press office, talks were held and views were exchanged on topics of mutual interest.

Minister Welcomes Government Team

LD1505185495 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 15 May 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Esteemed Dr. Najibollah Lafra'i, minister of state for foreign affairs, met this morning in his office esteemed Erkin Rahmatulloyev, Tajik deputy foreign minister.

Esteemed Lafra'i welcomed the delegation to Afghanistan and hoped that the results of talks between the high-ranking Tajik delegation and the Tajik opposition would contribute toward the establishment of peace and stability in Tajikistan and in the region and toward ending the current conflict.

On his part, on behalf of Tajik President Emomali Rakhmanov, the Tajik deputy foreign minister expressed appreciation to the government and Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, for proposing Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, as the venue of the talks.

The two sides then exchanged views on topics of mutual interest in a climate of friendship and understanding.

The meeting was attended by Tajik Foreign Ministry spokesman Zapar Saidov and by the head of the third political department.

According to another report, a delegation of the Tajik opposition led by Seyyed Abdollah Nuri arrived midday today in Kabul to participate in the upcoming Tajik peace talks. [passage omitted]

Rabbani Meets President, Opposition Leader

LD1705183495 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Esteemed professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, this morning at the Golkhana Presidential Palace received esteemed Emomali Rakhmanov, president of the Republic of Tajikistan.

The presidential press office reported to the BAKHTAR information agency that at this meeting the esteemed president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan spoke about the historical and cultural ties between the people of Afghanistan and Tajikistan and expressed hope that these ties would be further consolidated in the future.

The esteemed president also spoke about the situation in our country and shed light on recent developments in the city of Kabul and other areas of the country for the benefit of peace and restoration of security.

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Referring to the difficulties in the fraternal country of Tajikistan which came in being as a result of misunderstanding and [word indistinct], esteemed Borhanoddin Rabbani regarded the continuation of talks between the opposing forces in Tajikistan as a valuable and Islamic action. He voiced hope that the current talks would produce desirable results.

Esteemed Emomali Rakhmanov, president of the Republic of Tajikistan, voiced pleasure at the warm welcome extended to him during his arrival in Kabul by the state leadership and citizens of Kabul. He emphasized the peaceful solution of issues in Tajikistan through political means.

The esteemed president of the Republic of Tajikistan also hoped for progress in the current talks in Kabul and wished that the talks would reach beneficial results.

According to another report, esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani this afternoon at the headquarters of the presidency received esteemed Seyyed Abdollah Nuri, leader of the opposition against the government of Tajikistan. At this meeting, esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani spoke about common historical and cultural ties between the people of our country and the neighboring country of Tajikistan. He emphasized the political solution of the issues through talks and understanding in the two countries.

Esteemed Seyyed Abdollah Nuri then welcomed the good will displayed by the president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan regarding a political solution to the issue through understanding, and he voiced hope that the difficulties of the people of Tajikistan would soon be removed through such means and that durable peace and security would be restored nationwide in Tajikistan.

Roving Russian Envoy Pays Visit to Kabul

Revival of Relations Sought

LD1605173395 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1430 GMT 16 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Esteemed Deputy Foreign Minister Abdorrahim Ghafurzai met this afternoon with Aleksandr Abulov, roving ambassador of the Russian Federation. BAKHTAR reports that during the meeting the deputy foreign minister remarked on the fast and positive developments of the recent months in the military, political, and cultural spheres in the country, the resumption of international understanding and the role of the Islamic State of Afghanistan in this, the need to reopen foreign embassies, including that of the Russian Federation, and the Islamic State of Afghanistan's program regarding the UN peace efforts.

In response, the ambassador expressed the leaning of his country toward the continuation of mutual relations, and expressed the hope that the Islamic State authorities will be helped in this respect.

Aleksandr Abulov arrived this morning in Kabul for an exchange of views with the Islamic State of Afghanistan on the revival of mutual relations based on mutual interests, to inspect the Russian Embassy, and to making preparations for its reconstruction and reopening. He was received by the acting head of the third political directorate and acting head of the protocol department.

Meets Minister; Discusses Embassy

LD1705211395 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] This morning, Esteemed Dr. Najibollah Lafra'i, minister of state for foreign affairs, met Aleksandr Abulov, roving ambassador in the Russian Foreign Ministry.

At this meeting, esteemed Lafra'i welcomed Abulov in Kabul. Lafra'i spoke about the political-military developments in the country, the restoration of peace in Kabul and the need for the opening of the Russian Embassy in Kabul. Esteemed Lafra'i expressed the Islamic State's support for the political solution of the country's issues. Esteemed Lafra'i expressed appreciation for the Russia's positive stance regarding the resumption of Tajik peace talks in Kabul. In the course of explaining the purpose of his visit to Afghanistan, Abulov spoke about the restoration of relations between the two countries and expressed a desire for the reconstruction of the Russian embassy's installations and for meeting the president and Afghan leaders.

Kabul Readmitted to Asian Development Bank

LD1605170795 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1430 GMT 16 May 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Islamic State of Afghanistan has been readmitted as a member of the Asian Development Bank. The membership of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, which is a founding member of the Asian Development Bank, had been suspended after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. After the participation of the Afghan delegation in the annual meeting of the Bank, Afghanistan's readmission has been approved. Esteemed Minister of Finance Ahmad Rashedi [name and title as heard] attended the annual meeting of the bank, which was held in New Zealand, as head of the Afghan delegation. [passage omitted]

Beside meeting with the head of the Asian Development Bank and some delegations, the Islamic State of

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Afghanistan joined a working group of the bank and gained voting rights in the sessions of the Asian Development Bank. The minister of finance added: During the meeting of the Asian Bank a decision was taken on sending a delegation to assess the projects that they are to assist in.

India

Kashmir Atmosphere Said 'Conducive' to Elections

BK1705162895 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The chief election commissioner, Mr. T.N. Seshan, says the present atmosphere in Jammu and Kashmir is conducive for holding elections. Talking to newspersons in Jaipur today, he said that the commission will make all efforts to hold elections in the state soon.

The prime minister informed the Lok Sabha today that the electoral rolls for Jammu and Kashmir are now being printed. He said that the process of filing claims and exercises has been completed according to the program of the Election Commisison. Mr. Narasimha Rao said the aim of the government is restore the democratic process in the state at the earliest. Replying to a question, he said the government has taken steps to curb influx of terrorists and arms from across the border. Patrolling by the security forces has been intensified in vulnerable areas.

Paper: Election Prospects 'Charred'

BK1705133895 Delhi BUSINESS STANDARD in English 13 May 95 p 11

[Editorial: "Kashmir Poll Hopes Charred"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Few can have any doubts that the burning down of the Charar Sharif shrine in Kashmir has dealt a serious blow to the process of political normalization in the state. The centre-piece of this process was the holding of elections there, in mid June. That clearly looks impossible now, for at least two reasons. First, it will take weeks, if not months, before clear evidence emerges as to who exactly was responsible for the fire. Although the government is saying that the whole thing was inspired by the Pakistanis, the evidence it has adduced is almost too pat, both in terms of content as well as timing. It will have to come up with far more if it wishes to establish incontrovertibly that the Pakistani Government was involved in the outrage. It will also have to establish that the fire was not started by the Army, which some local residents at least, seem to suspect. Even if this is not true, Kashmiri Muslims would be more prone to believe this version and that could hardly help tempers cool down enough for the holding of elections.

Second, as a consequence of this resentment, it is unlikely that there would be much of a turnout, even if the government were to press on with a poll. It has been argued in these columns that a flawed poll is better than no poll at all, and the prospect of a low turnout should not deter the government. That argument still holds good, except that if there is a boycott and no one turns up at all — as did happen once — the election would lack even the figleaf of legitimacy which a low turnout would ensure. In other words, given the mood in the Valley, the risk of a boycott is very high and probably not worth taking at this point. There simply is not enough time between now and June 18 when president's rule comes to an end. It will have to be extended by at least another year, because six months from now, the country will be in the throes of a general election and no one will want a distraction as big as the one elections in Kashmir will provide. Elections in Kashmir will have to be a standalone affair, not only because of the logistics, but also because if they get subsumed in a larger election, there will be no PR [public relations] mileage to be had. A postponement has thus become unavoidable.

How should the intervening time be used? Pressure is bound to develop to give up the softish policy adopted by Prime Minister Rao in the last few months. Under the circumstances he cannot be blamed if he tries to do another Jagmohan [appointing tough-talking governor] in the Valley. But as the last few years have shown, in such matters patience often pays long term dividends, in as much as it helped establish good faith with the people.

The government should also consider the possibility of deleting Article 370 of the Constitution — it was never meant to be permanent anyway — which gives Kashmir special status. Its central effect has been to prevent non-Kashmiris from buying land in the Valley. This had the effect of freezing the population balance, 80:20 in favour of the Muslims. With the departure of the Hindus, who were chased away by militants, that ratio has worsened. There is only one way to change this, and that is to enable people from outside Kashmir to own land in the Valley.

Editorial Calls Pakistani Protest 'Laughable'

BK1805085395 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 17 May 95 p 8

[Editorial: "Pakistan deserves ridicule"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan has reacted in the most predictable manner to the burning of the Charar

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Sharif shrine in Kashmir. As in the past, it has sought to score propaganda points in its campaign to annex this Indian State, ignoring the basic code of international law, that no country has the right to interfere in the internal affairs of another sovereign nation. But this apart, it is amusing to witness Pakistan shedding crocodile tears over a tragedy that would not have come about had it not been for Islamabad's dubious strategy of instigating disaffection in the Valley by not only providing arms to the separatists but also sending across mercenaries who are but ruthless criminals by another name. Those foreign governments who may feel persuaded to take note of Pakistan's complaint should also take into account the facts, including the identify of the terrorists who had occupied the shrine and masterminded last week's devastation.

Ms Benazir Bhutto's Government cannot but be aware of these uncomfortable facts which fly in the face of its repeated claim that Pakistan provides only moral support to the secessionists. Rather than allow the truth to be exposed, it has chosen to go on offensive, seeking the help of the Organisation of Islamic Conference in its mischievous mission of slander and worse. In a sense, all this only highlights Ms Bhutto's increasing desperation; Despite upping the ante and stepping up the proxy war in Jammu and Kashmir, she has failed to take Pakistan's single-point agenda any closer to fulfilment. For all practical purposes, Islamabad's designs on Kashmir remain wishful thinking, which is not to deny the mischief potential of either Ms Bhutto or the military establishment of Pakistan.

Seen in the context, Pakistan's decision to observe Friday [19 May] as a "day of mourning" is a laughable initiative, not least because the shrine whose destruction has so greatly upset Islamabad was erected in the memory of a saint who in his lifetime spared no occasion to berate Islamic theocracy. The irony is further highlighted by the fact that while Islamabad subscribes to the Two-Nation theory, Sheikh Nur-ud-Din believed in exactly the opposite. Given this backdrop, the comity of nations should treat Pakistan's protestations with the scorn and ridicule it deserves. Anything less than this would amount to legitimising Pakistan's impious transborder activities which have been allowed unhindered for far too long. What is at stake is not only stability in India and the subcontinent, but peace all over the world. Let the Western countries bear in mind that the terror that is being exported to India today could be directed at their shores tomorrow.

Reportage, Commentary on 'Terrorist' Act Decisions

Act Declared 'Ineffective'

BK1605161395 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 16 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Uttar Pradesh Government has decided not to enforce TADA [Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act] in the state from today. A notification to this effect was issued in Lucknow last evening rendering TADA ineffective. According to an official press release in Lucknow today, TADA was invoked during the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] rule in March 1992, declaring 11 districts of the state as terrorists affected. AIR correspondent reports that Uttar Pradesh has become the first state in the country to declare TADA as ineffective and to stop its misuse.

New Legislation Will Replace Act

BK1705034495 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The union government has decided to replace the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Prevention Act, TADA, with a new legislation. According to agency reports in New Delhi, the cabinet at its meeting last night decided not to extend the decade old controversial act which expires on the 23d of this month. The new law will have adequate built-in safeguards to prevent its misuse. The issue was discussed threadbare by the cabinet following persistent demand from states, political parties, and other quarters to repeal the act.

The TADA was enacted in 1985 to tackle the extremist activities in Punjab. It was extended first for two years, followed by periodical extensions. Concerned over the mounting pressure against the continuation of the act, the prime minister had convened a meeting of political parties and chief ministers recently to discuss the issue. Barring the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party], Shiv Sena, and the AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munetra Kazhagam], most political parties have demanded the scrapping of the act.

The BJP president, Mr. L.K. Advani, has said that the main issue of the abuse of TADA should be taken care of while enacting a new law. In a statement in New Delhi, he said that the BJP will support a suitable legislation to effectively tackle terrorism.

The Janata Dal general secretary, Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan, said that the constituents of the National Front and the left parties combine will oppose the move of the government to bring TADA in any form.

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The AIADMK leader in the Lok Sabha, Mr. V. Narayanan, said that the party will welcome the new law if it does not dilute the provisions of TADA through adequate safeguards.

Delhi Radio Views Replacing Act

BK1705060595 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 17 May 95

[Commentary by S.C. Bhatt]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A campaign have been building up in the country for a long time for scrapping the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Prevention Act, TADA. The act originally passed in 1985, at a time when terrorism had raised its ugly head in Punjab, was extended from time to time. It is due to expire, unless extended further, on the 23d of this month.

Punjab terrorism has been more or less out of the way, but a serious problem exists in Kashmir. Its tentacles have been spreading to other parts of the country too. Even some foreigners were abducted some time ago by the terrorists. Fortunately, the abductors were captured and the hostages freed. There have been two views about TADA's continuation. Several political parties have been demanding its repeal, many state governments have been of the same view, but the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and the AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munetra Kazhagam] are among the parties which wanted the act to continue. Four chief ministers recently met in Bombay and wanted that TADA be allowed to continue. They were from Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Delhi.

Unfortunately, an impression have been created that the law was against the Muslims. This was strengthened when a majority of the accused in the Bombay blast case happen to be from that community. Maharashtra and other governments gave figures to show that the majority of the TADA detainees were from other communities. This did not help and the ruling party suffered in the assembly elections in several states because the Muslim voters were made to believe that the law was against them.

Lawyers are the most vociferous champion of the act's repeal. Some people believe that under TADA bail is not possible or easy, and this accounts for their attitude. But the Supreme Court has upheld the law as constitutionally valid. However, the government has have to bow to a consistent demand. Now, the question is: What happens to the present detainees? Can they go scot-free as some people feel. Obviously, some provisions will have to be made for criminals who have killed 257 people in the Bombay blasts. They cannot be let free until justice is meted out. The replacing act may make provisions for all that. We have to admit that there was a measure of misuse and the police found it easy to detain anyone under TADA on the smallest pretext. That does not mean that the baby should be thrown out with the bath water. The nation's interest must be supreme and those who plot or act against them must be brought to book.

Editorial: PRC Test Makes 'Mockery' of NPT

BK1705100695 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 17 May 95 p 8

[Editorial: "A mockery of NPT"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] China's underground nuclear test on Monday [15 May] has made a mockery of the [nuclear] Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Coming as it does only a few days after 178 nations including China indefinitely extended the NPT, the test underlines the hypocrisy of nuclear powers and their hype on how the treaty would prevent the spread of atomic weapons. The test was Beijing's third in a year and the first of five it is expected to conduct this year. In fact, the Chinese leadership has continued to conduct nuclear tests in blatant defiance of an international moratorium on such exercises. Every time China holds a nuclear test it provokes a routine round of protests from other nuclear powers, but even the United States, despite its new-found status of the only superpower in the world, has failed to make Beijing fall in line with the so-called consensus by NPT nations against nuclear tests. It is quite possible that China was only waiting for the NPT conference to be over before conducting the test. Ironically, Beijing had at the conference agreed to a statement of principles which had asked nuclear weapon states to exercise restraint till a comprehensive test ban treaty is imposed next year.

Such cynical manipulation by nuclear powers of the NPT lends credence to this country's oft repeated stand that the treaty would remain discriminatory in nature as long as it encourages a policy of nuclear haves and have-nots. Indeed, countries like India can hardly be expected to give up their nuclear option and tamely sign the NPT when its signatories themselves do not observe the rules of the game. Under the circumstances, those who participated at the recent NPT conference have little or no moral authority to give lectures to this country about an international imperative to fall in line with the treaty. Such homilies would have no effect whatsoever till a genuine attempt is made to evolve and enforce a common code of conduct across the world on the nuclear issue. The objective of global non-proliferation cannot be achieved by the mere indefinite extension of the NPT as the Chinese have so brutally exposed.

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As far as this country is concerned, the Chinese underground nuclear test this week not only raises questions on the validity of NPT principles but also has more direct implications. After all, India can ill afford to ignore the message of a blast estimated to be the equivalent of 40 to 150 kilotonnes of TNT in a neighbouring country with which it had fought a war in the past. The threat posed to this country by China's burgeoning nuclear programme is compounded by reports of Beijing helping Pakistan build up its own nuclear arsenal. With NPT countries either looking the other way or simply helpless in checking this twin danger from across India's borders, no government in New Delhi was adopt a conciliatory policy on the nuclear issue. It would be far better for the champions of nuclear non-proliferation to first bring to book the proliferators in NPT's own stable before seeking to chastise those who have chosen to remain outside.

Iran

Cabinet Meets on Economic, Foreign Currency Issues

Approves New Currency Regulations

LD1705213795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The cabinet met on Wednesday [17 May] afternoon under the chairmanship of President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. At this meeting, the cabinet approved regulations comprising six points for the export foreign currency market. The guidelines are for regulating the foreign currency market; returning the foreign currency income from non-oil exports and the proper use of the same with due regard to priorities; providing foreign exchange for the import of raw materials, machinery and other requirements of factories; providing foreign exchange for the import of basic foodstuffs and essential services; supporting the value of the rial; preventing the exchange of foreign currency in domestic deals, and giving proper protection to the increasing trend of non-oil exports.

According to the first article of the regulations, all exporters will have to return all the foreign currency earned from the export of goods and services in determined cases. Those exporters who earlier had to return 50 percent of their export foreign currency will be subject to the present regulations.

The second article obliges the exporters to sell their foreign currency earned from exports to state banks. The same article designates 3,000 rials for every U.S. dollar until the end of 1374 [year beginning 21 March 1995].

The third article determines the period of undertaking for the declaration and sale of the said foreign currency to the banks to be six months for [the export of] carpet and three months for other goods and services.

According to the this decision those who sell their foreign currencies earlier than the required period will receive rewards in rials. Those who delay will be fined.

Those exporters who sell their foreign currency earned from the export of their products to the banks will be given first priority for the import of goods required for their products. The Central Bank will put the required foreign currency at their disposal according to criteria. The criteria will be set and published by a committee which will be appointed by the president.

Regarding exports to the Central Asian states, the undertaking for the return of all the foreign currency income is also set. In exceptional cases — to be determined by a committee that is described in Article 5 — the exporter will be allowed to obviate that commitment of selling the foreign currency by presenting the green import card at the same point of export.

According to Article 5, the banking system allocates the purchased foreign currency to be used for the import of goods and services on the basis of priority of requirement.

It must be mentioned that those foreign currencies that are being sold at 1,750 rials on the basis of the Budget Law or other government decisions and the support headquarters for the market regulation plan have been allocated according to regulations and will not be subject to the above article.

According to the cabinet's decision on Wednesday, foreign currency dealings outside the banking network and more than the determined rate of 3,000 rials to the U.S. dollar are banned and the banking system is obliged to provide necessary facilities for foreign currency accounts for those who hold such currencies.

The decisions come into force on Sunday the 31st of Ordibehesht [21 May].

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Bank Head Interviewed on Regulations

LD1805130695 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT 17 May 95

["Exclusive" interview with Central Bank Governor Mohsen Nurbakhsh by unidentified correspondent in Tehran on 17 May — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Correspondent] We have witnessed fluctuations in foreign currency rates during the past few weeks. But, on the basis of a cabinet decision tonight, the buying and selling of foreign currency has come under [government] control. Also certain rates have been announced for currency for the [import of] goods and for currency earned through exports. I ask Mr. Nurbakhsh to tell us about the reasons for the decision and about the actual cabinet approval.

[Nurbakhsh] In the name of God, the merciful, compassionate. As you know, the currency earned through the export of goods and services showed a relatively satisfactory growth during the first [development] plan due to [government] encouragement. According to the customs' statistics the value of our non-oil exports are something between $4 billion and $5 billion. If we compare these figures with what we spend — from oil income — on the goods that the country needs, we see that the ratio is almost one to two. [passage omitted]

This ratio currently stands at one to two. Very well, a principal imbalance in our economy, which was dependency on oil, has been reduced.

The second question raised was how can the foreign currency earned from non-oil exports be used for trade for the country and to provide the acceptable requirements of the country? The latest situation in our planning was that in reality the exporter and importer were placed opposite each other and through their exchanges the requirements of the importer were met. In recent weeks — bearing in mind the enemy's propaganda and the special psychological atmosphere that was created and the fluctuations of the foreign currency rates — we were faced with a situation where exporters expected the value of hard currency to increase and therefore would delay offering their foreign currency [for sale] because they had noticed that the more they delayed the higher the price would be. The importers, taking into account to their concerns over the providing their requirements, would try to buy their currency today when they needed the currency next month. Therefore in the demand sector we were witnessing an urgency, and a delay in the supply sector. That in itself caused the [currency] prices to increase more. And that increase would confirm the inflationary views of exporters and importers; that is what they had predicted would come true and would therefore affect their approach.

The government had come to the conclusion that if it let the situation alone, and in fact under the mutual relationship between the exporters and importers bring the foreign currency earned from non-oil exports into the country's trade and the provision of the country's requirements, then we would witness certain fluctuations in currency prices that would inevitably affect other sectors in the country. Therefore the government decided to break the relationship between importers and exporters, the same situation that exists in many countries where there is no need for this mutual relationship, [no need] for the exporters and importers to meet the requirements [of the country] through a direct relationship. On that basis, through investigations and consultations,the banking system was introduced as as mediator between those two. The banking system will provide the requirements of importers by the funds that it will put at their disposal. Therefore the importer will no longer have any need to deal with the exporter and will register his orders and open credit with specific [currency] prices. On the other hand the exporter, bearing in mind that there is no importer to offer him his foreign exchange, will refer to the banking system and will sell his foreign currency to the banks.

The government drew up a set of articles on that basis, part of which defines the regulations for the transfer and supply of foreign exchange requirements from foreign currency earned through exports and another part governs the regulations regarding the transfer of foreign currency for services which concerns individuals.

[Correspondent] Please tell us about the rate of foreign currency for basic commodities, and other goods in general. What is the rate for non-oil exports?

[Nurbakhsh] According to the cabinet decision we will have two rates in our foreign currency system and foreign trade. All basic commodities which comprise all essential commodities, such as rice, sugar, and cooking oil in the trade sector; or pesticides and fertilizers in the agriculture sector; or fodder and veterinary medicine in the sector relating to the Construction Jihad [Ministry]; or products such as detergents, cleansing and hygiene products, and the requirements in the industrial sector will all be provided at the rate of 175 tomans [toman=10 rials; ie: 1,750 rials to the U.S. dollar]. On top of that we have requirements in the pharmaceutical sector and government projects all of which will continue to use foreign currency at the rate of 175 tomans.

On the other hand we need to provide some goods such as certain raw materials and spare parts for factories, or

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goods which the private sector wants to import in order to help the market regulation, such as imported rice and cooking oil, or other goods which are in the Commerce Ministry's list known as the 54-item list. They include office machinery, computer and similar goods which can be imported using the rate of 300 tomans [to the dollar]. This rate is valid until the end of the current [Iranian] year [20 March 1996]. The majority of those requirements will be met according to priorities which will be set by a committee which has been appointed.

[Correspondent] In your view what effect will the government decision have on the price of essential goods, especially on the people's daily requirements?

[Nurbakhsh] In view of the fact that a major part of the essential goods are provided using [foreign exchange at a rate of] 175 tumans [to the dollar], and those [goods] fixed by the market regulation at 300 tumans in connection with export foreign currency, I think it certainly will result in stabilizing the exchange rate. Because in view of increases in the value of export foreign currency, our society expected inflation to rise, that is, everyone was forecasting price increases based on the value of foreign currency.

In view of the government decision and the method of providing and supplying essential goods, as planned, we shall have a more stable situation concerning the value of those [essential] goods.

[Correspondent] It was announced in the government resolution that the foreign currency earned from non-oil exports will be purchased from exporters on basis of 3,000 rials to each dollar. What effect will this have on the figures of non-oil exports, and what is been the foundation for the pricing?

[Nurbakhsh] What we took into account in determining the value of the foreign currency earned from exports, and on which the Cabinet laid emphasis, was that exports should be more profitable than other activities. On that basis, the average value of the export foreign currency was assessed during 1373 [year ended 20 March 1995]. If we assess that, in addition to the situation concerning the domestic price of our essential export goods, whether that is carpets, agriculture products such as pistachio nuts, or industrial products, we came to the conclusion that the rate should be 300 tumans [to the dollar], which was about the average rate in 1373. It was even lower than that. If we look at the figures on the value of export foreign currency we will see that up to [the month of] Bahman 1373 [corresponding to 21 January-19 February 1995] the rate has been around 280-270 tumans. Therefore, the rate of 300 tumans is in the interests of exporters and will bring a good profit for them. We think exports will continue to enjoy a good market abroad.

I should stress that while the value of the dollar increases without real foundation, our trade with the outside world will be to our disadvantage. For example, when pistachio nuts are exported, the exporter is prepared to sell at a lower price on the international market because of the higher value of the dollar. Therefore, the amount of foreign currency that we earned from the export of a specified quantity of pistachio or other goods would be less than amount we could earn at a fixed [exchange] rate.

Thus, scales would be turned in our favor — taking into account that at rate of 300 tumans [to the dollar] we are in a relatively superior position, compared with other countries which export similar goods and can compete with them. Therefore, I think those exporters who are after real income, exporters who are after a safe market, exporters who have suffered as a result of unhealthy domestic competition concerning exports and wish to enjoy a stable situation, should welcome the current situation. They can now count on their domestic purchases as well as on the income which would be earned from exports; and this will give them more confidence in export activities. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] What do you think will be the psychological effects of the freedom given to exporters in return for the foreign exchange received?

[Nurbakhsh] You see, I think we should differentiate between true exporters who seek foreign exchange revenues and exporters who seek revenues not from exports, but to make a profit through supplementary activities such as importing goods.

If we adopt a policy of export incentives, if we grant tax exemptions to exporters, it is not for their imports but for their exports and for earning foreign exchange for the country. Therefore, I think it is not correct to say that freedom has been taken away from exporters because we have not given them import permits. We have given them the freedom to make plans based on those certain factors, to carry out their export activities in any field that we enjoy a superior position, and obtain a good income.

As to how that foreign exchange revenue will be used, I think it is a decision which should be made by the government considering the country as a whole, on the basis of the existing priorities, the threats to our foreign exchange revenues, so that we could make good use of it.

I do not think that any rights have been taken away from exporters. For, if we have accepted them and given

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them advantages as exporters, it is because they have been engaged in export activities, not because they have sought to import goods using the foreign exchange they have earned from exports.

[Correspondent] There were some people who imported goods using the foreign exchange earned from exports. What will be their fate?

[Nurbakhsh] I think their position is more secure, because they can refer to banks and obtain the foreign exchange they require in connection with goods, the import of which is permissible in accordance with national priorities, and since they can count on a specified rate and obtain their requirement.

During the past two or three weeks I have received several letters form factory owners or importers who said that, because of the trend of prices they cannot plan their production, and also they do not know whether their goods are marketable at those prices. I think that by removing those uncertainties and giving more peace of mind to importers and producers who wish to use that foreign exchange is, in itself, a positive step which will be welcomed by importers.

[Correspondent] So, what is the situation of those importers who were importing without the transfer of foreign currency?

[Nurbakhsh] When we say that the foreign exchange which is earned from all export activities — both the export of goods and services — should be returned to the banking system and that anyone who has import requirements can use this system, I do not think that there would be any reason why anyone would want to import goods into the country without the transfer of foreign currency.

[Correspondent] Most of our questions concerned the important issues of the export of foreign currency and goods. Some people have, or had, foreign currency. With these [new] rates and regulations that have been set down now for the exchange of foreign currency, how can people exchanged or trade the foreign exchange they possess?

[Nurbakhsh] You see, [exchange] rate becomes relevant when there is the intention to buy and sell. On the basis of the regulations we have announced, anyone who wants to sell foreign currency in their possession, should sell it at the same official rate we have announced. But if there is no intention to buy and sell then the issue of rates does not arise and neither, therefore, does the issue of these regulations. Thus, the issue of the rate and exchange [of foreign currency] falls within the framework of government regulations which have to be observed by everyone.

[Correspondent] Meaning that people should send their foreign currency to the banks?

[Nurbakhsh] If they intend to exchange it, if they intend to sell it, then they have to do this at the official rate.

[Correspondent] And what is the rate for this kind of foreign currency?

[Nurbakhsh] This kind of currency will also be at the rate of 300 tumans.

[Correspondent] My last question is about foreign currency drafts, to and from abroad. How will they be used?

[Nurbakhsh] [passage omitted] What is transferred from abroad to the country is permissible. It can also be transferred back to abroad from the same account. Therefore, it is permissible.

In connection with services which the banks provide to those who have some foreign currency, the approval makes allowances for it. In accordance with existing regulations there will be foreign currency accounts which we will make active, so that if the people have any [foreign] money they could keep it in an investment account or a saving account. Some accounts are envisioned to give a good rate of interest. If any transfer is to take place from those accounts — in other words, if payment is to made to other people, or if it is changed into rials — then it must be paid into the official network to which I referred.

[Correspondent] Will withdrawals from personal foreign currency accounts be in foreign currency or in rials?

[Nurbakhsh] In foreign currency. That is, if you have a foreign currency account and put money in it, you can withdraw from it.

[Correspondent] Thank you.

Minister: 'Closely Monitoring' Markets During Ban

MS1805103095 London FINANCIAL TIMES in English 18 May 95 p 4

[Report by Robert Corzine: "Tehran Warns Opec Partners Over US Ban"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran — Iran took action yesterday to counter the growing impact of tighter US trade sanctions against the country.

It warned other big oil producers not to take advantage of the US ban on purchases of Iranian crude by trying to take away some of Tehran's share of the world oil markets. At the same time it announced new measures to halt the steep fall in the value of its currency, the rial, that has been exacerbated by the US action.

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Mr Gholam Reza Aqazadeh-Kho'i, the oil minister, said Iran was "closely monitoring" international markets to ensure that other members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries did not increase their oil production at Tehran's expense.

He said Iran might consider changing its pricing policy if it detected any increased production by other Opec states trying to capture some of the 300,000 barrels a day which had been bought from Iran by overseas subsidiaries of US oil companies before the ban.

Earlier this month President Bill Clinton signed an order barring such subsidiaries from buying Iranian crude oil because of Tehran's alleged support for terrorist organisations.

Mr Aqazadeh-Kho'i confirmed that the US move had caused some disarray in Iran's oil marketing arrangements.

In the short term it will have to rely more heavily on spot sales to replace the term contracts which many of the US companies had with the state-owned National Iranian Oil Company.

"It will take us some time to pass through the transition," he said. Iran did not want to "engage in a price war or give discounts" to attract new buyers for the oil previously bought by the US companies.

But it might change its position if it found other Opec producers increasing their output.

"Nobody has a right to take advantage of changed market conditions," he said.

Last Friday [12 May] Mr Aqazadeh-Kho'i ordered a one-week surge in Iran's oil output to 4.1m barrels a day, about 500,000 b/d more than its Opec quota. He denied, however, that the production build-up was intended as a threat to other Opec producers.

The minister confirmed that negotiations were under way to find another foreign company to undertake the development of the two offshore oil fields in the Gulf which Conoco of the US was prevented from developing by the Clinton administration.

He would not name the foreign companies which were involved, but he predicted that a deal might be ready for signing by the next Opec meeting next month.

He added that the US decision to block the Conoco deal showed that the US companies were being "held hostage to domestic US politics".

Iran's warning to other oil producers came as the cabinet in Tehran acted to stem the sharp decline in the value of the rial which followed the tightening of US sanctions.

In a move to control the booming black market in foreign currency, the government announced that all foreign exchange dealings would in future be confined to the commercial banking system.

It also announced a new fixed rate of 3,000 rials to the dollar for exporters. The new rate is well below yesterday's free market rate of about 5,400 rials to the dollar.

Under the new regulations exporters will no longer be able to retain any of their hard currency earnings.

Instead they will have to sell all hard currency receipts to the central bank at the new fixed rate.

The senior government official last night predicted that the move would have a "positive psychological impact" on Iranians, many of whom have been converting their capital into US dollars or gold because of rampant inflation.

Minister Calls For Crackdown on Illegal Traders

LD1705152495 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1215 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Justice Minister [Mohammad Esma'il Shushtari] has urged officials and those in charge of implementing the State Penal Code to confront smugglers of goods and foreign currency throughout the country with firmness. [passage omitted]

Shushtari said: Estimates show that currently, there are about $3.5 billion worth of goods being illegally traded in the country. He hoped that, with the latest decisions taken by the government to secure people's essential goods by means of the coupon distribution method, people's ability to secure their basic needs may improve.

Daily Hails Law To Punish 'Economic Terrorists'

NC1805101995 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 16 May 95 p 2

[Editorial: "No Mercy for Economic Terrorists"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In what has been an unprecedented measure in the history of Iran's judicial system, the Expediency Council is finalizing a law which will ensure that profiteers will face the gallows.

The initiative is welcome. For too long the "economic terrorists" have held the economy, and by extension the people, hostage. The passing of this law will herald a new era in which lenient sentences will no longer await the very individuals who become wealthy at the expense of others.

When the people see that the violators are punished their confidence in the law and those who are entrusted with

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upholding the law will increase to the point that they will even help the authorities in finding those who are sapping the lifeblood of the country.

Indeed one could say that such measures have long been overdue, but the fact is that the Expediency Council has had the courage of its conviction to make life difficult for the economic terrorists, thereby creating a more suitable environment for the real entrepreneurs and the honest merchants. In the future the government should not allow speculators to inflict heavy death blows on the body of the economy by reaping overnight fortunes.

The enactment of the law alone will not be sufficient. No country has prospered merely through the passage of laws against violators, however strict the laws may be. The criminals have to be shown that they will be given no respite by the judicial and the executive branches.

The hardship caused by such terrorists is no less than the one caused by those who have openly declared their opposition to the Islamic Republic and who have allied themselves with foreign powers in their bid to destroy our revolution. To safeguard our revolution we have taken measures to put an end to the terrorists with guns. It is time that we acted on terrorists with money.

Commentary Criticizes 'Clinton's Paradox'

NC1605195095 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 3 May 95 p 11

[Commentary by A. Salah: "Clinton's Paradox"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The preliminary stages of the impeachment of those accused of causing an explosion in the New York World Trade Center have revealed that the FBI was aware of the incident two years before it actually took place. An Egyptian named 'Amal Salem had been made to infiltrate the close associates of Shaykh 'Umar 'Ali 'Abd-al-Rahman and all the activities of this combatant cleric were controlled in this manner.

The U.S. federal police have presented a videotape to the tribunal as evidence of the charges against this Egyptian cleric and have claimed that the conversation on the issuing of the orders for the explosion between the shaykh and the primary suspect had been recorded.

After ascribing the accusations to the Egyptian Muslims living in the United States and after presenting the so-called documentary evidence by the FBI, efforts were made to incorporate a display of strength as well. The intelligentsia in the U.S. press circles—whose number is few and far between—raised the question: If the FBI was aware of this matter, why did it permit the plan to be carried out?

This scenario can have two possible interpretations. First, that all the FBI's propaganda regarding the infiltration into the organization and knowledge of its objectives are false aimed at deceiving the U.S. public and preserving the false prestige of the U.S. Federal Police.

The second is that this explosion was staged or at least incited by the FBI and so that Islam would be projected as criminal to the American people. Unfortunately, this has conjured up a distorted image of Islam that depicts it not as a religion but as a dangerous adversary against which the West has the right to declare war. Accordingly, to implement this plot, an important site in the heart of the U.S. economic center, New York, was to be made the venue of this explosion, and right from the outset the incident was to be blamed on the Muslims.

This was the same tactic that Hitler used in World War II to initiate a devastating war. As a pretext for implementing his plan, he sacrificed 30 German soldiers at his own border post with Poland by launching an artillery attack on it. After the attack, Hitler's propaganda apparatus paid tribute to these soldiers as "national heroes" who had become victims of Poland's aggression against the German border. The Nazi Germany mass media immediately called for a retaliatory attack against Poland by Germany, and after a week the Nazi forces occupied Warsaw.

Today the United States has used the same Hitlerite tactic to implement its plot against Muslims. Following the Oklahoma explosion, Muslims and Islamic fundamentalists were proclaimed the primary suspects in the list of probable culprits. Fortunately, due to factual evidence and various motives for dissent against the White House policies within the United States, the U.S. mass media was forced to correct its version and to seek the roots of the incident inside the United States.

Following the explosion, Clinton called for the severest punishment against the agents of this incident, and added: "In this incident scores of innocent women and children have been killed by a group of criminals, and therefore I call for the execution sentence against those responsible for this sinister international incident. I believe that if the execution sentence is not issued against them, then such a sentence will lose its utility and distinction."

There is no dispute on this part of the issue and we also condemn those responsible for this atrocity. However, it is interesting that the same Clinton should make earth-shattering remarks in his speech on the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II by saying: "The decision by Harry Truman, erstwhile U.S. President, to use the atom

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bomb in Japan was correct and very commendable... and there is no reason for us to apologize to the Japanese for it!"

Yes. In Hiroshima and Nagasaki 300,000 people lost their lives in an instant. As the French thinker and writer (Mulreaux) wrote at that time: "A society that has permitted itself the use of an atomic bomb cannot consider itself civilized or fit to defend civilization. This is because in the history of mankind there is no other weapon that has killed so many people in one fell swoop. The very name of this weapon generates fear and insecurity, not to mention the actual use of this horrifying weapon against hundreds of thousands of innocent human beings."

However, today we perceive that U.S. President Clinton, who was not even born during the atomic bombing of Japan, is endorsing this massive atrocity, advocating its use to attain peace, and describing it as democracy!" Such a use of contradictory psychological attitudes that indicates a mental imbalance can be called a "paradox." [preceding word in English]

This is the same tactic that the U.S. President used regarding the Oklahoma explosion, describing it as a crime but deeming the atomic bombing of Hiroshima as correct and endorsing it! Psychologists believe that such "paradoxes" are the result of chromosome [preceding word in English] imbalances, which steer the afflicted person toward a dangerous condition!

Expressing its reaction to Clinton's paradox, a British [unnamed] newspaper has presented the Oklahoma incident in such a manner that an element of joy seems to emerge. In its headlines, it wrote: "This is not Oklahoma, it is Belfast!" This newspaper used this headline with the intention of making a point that for many years the Americans supported the IRA and today they are faced with a similar situation.

Of course, I also wished to compare the photographs of the Oklahoma explosion with those of the scenes of the missile attacks on Tehran, Dezful, Susangerd, Qasr-e Shirin, Abadan, Hoveyzeh, Bostan, Palestine, Algeria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Chechnya, the direct cause of which is the United States, which had stamped them with its seal of approval. I did not do so as I believe that one must not have hasty reactions and become vengeful like the British. As Muslims we do not permit ourselves to be disrespectful about the victims of such an incident, especially since they involve women and children. In our worldly experience "justice" is not something that can be bartered or bargained about, but is an objective that should be accessible to all.

However, there is a subtle point here that Clinton should realize, and that is: Weren't you a silent spectator when the city of Groznyy was transformed into rubble by the Russian Armed Forces and did not even utter a word in condemnation? Are you not...[sentence, ellipsis as published]

Mr. Clinton, didn't you set the headquarters of the Davidian sect ablaze after a 40-day siege and burn scores of innocent men, women, and children alive? Didn't you personally issue the decree for closing this dossier and banning further investigation into it? Today you should know that inside the United States people have appeared who are opening this closed dossier and are dissecting your inner paradox with the surgeon's lancet. They are the same persons who have been destroyed by the years of your misleading propaganda, and by resorting to logic, they are defining the right path from the crooked one today.

Greek Ambassador Views U.S. Sanctions, Bosnia, Ties

NC1805104795 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 15 May 95 pp 1, 14

[Report by the TEHRAN TIMES Political Desk]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran — The Greek Ambassador to Tehran, John Thomoglou, told the TEHRAN TIMES Saturday [13 May] that Greece would not follow the Clinton's embargo call against Iran.

"We will continue our relations with Iran," he said adding, "The European Union has adopted dialogue not confrontation with Iran."

Iran-Europe relations should be based on goodwill, trust and mutual understanding, the ambassador said. Iran should trust Europe more than before at this crucial juncture, he underlined.

The ambassador emphasized, "Iran is a big regional power and plays an important role in Central Asian, Persian Gulf, and the adjacent regions. When we deal with Iran's neighbors, we keep in mind the role of Iran. We are close to Iran and have the right to ask for the improvement of bilateral relations."

On Iran's role in settling the Balkan's problem, he said Iran has played a crucial role in this connection and has helped a lot to the Bosnian people.

Iran and Greece mutually have tried to help the OIC [Organization of Islamic Conference] and the Contact Group of the European Union in finding a solution to the problem, Thomoglou said, adding, though we have not seen the result we may see it in the future.

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Referring to the Tripartite Talks on Bosnia, he said there is a good image of how Muslims and Christians could sit together and cooperate to help solve problems of other countries.

He added that the third round of Trilateral Talks on Bosnia (Iran, Greece and Bosnia) would be held in the near future. "We would like to see the Serbs participate in the talks," he said.

Not only in Balkans, but in the region also Iran has tried to help its neighbors settle their differences, the ambassador said.

On Iran-Greece relations, he said the relations are very very good. But this is time to implement projects, he said adding, we have talked enough and the time for action has come.

The ambassador also expressed hope that Iran-Greece joint economic commission would be set up as soon as possible.

Thomoglou said that Iran and Greece could expand cooperation in various fields including tourism food industry, agriculture and a host of other areas.

The ambassador also said that the Greek Embassy officials in Tehran enjoy absolute freedom to observe religious rituals on holy occasions. Iran is a safe country with enormous tourist attraction sites, he added.

Ukrainian Ambassador Denies Missile Sale

LD1705143795 Tehran IRNA in English 1247 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 17, IRNA — Ukrainian ambassador here, Ivan Maydan, denied the allegations by a Zionist regime's official that Kiev is selling anti-warship missiles to Iran.

In an interview published in today's edition of 'IRAN' morning daily, Maydan referred to the accusations of a Zionist regime's official against Tehran which was also quoted by the 'JERUSALEM POST' on Monday [15 May].

Quoting the official, the daily claimed that Tel Aviv has protested to Kiev against sell of the missiles to Iran.

Maydan touched on Tehran-Kiev ties and called mutual relations as good and positive and said the two countries are cooperating in many political, economic and cultural grounds.

He further expressed hope for further expansion of Tehran-Kiev ties.

Turkey Urged Against Expanding Ties With Israel

NC1805073495 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 4 May 95 p 12

[Unattributed commentary: "Turkey Will Suffer Losses Expanding Ties With Tel Aviv"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Political relations between Turkey and the Zionist regime entered a new phase with the visits of the Zionist deputy foreign minister to Ankara and efforts toward broadening relations.

Political relations between the two governments of Turkey and occupied Palestine in the past two years have been constantly expanding under the influence of particular factors. The political and strategic coordination and unanimity among the United States, Turkey, and Israel with regard to actions and reactions in the region were the main factors for broadening the cooperation between the Ankara and Tel Aviv governments.

Tansu Ciller's visit to Israel last fall and earlier efforts to boost relations between Turkey and the Zionist regime within the framework of an exchange of visits between officials have brought the political stances of the two countries closer.

The events relating to the oil war of 1369 [year beginning 21 March 1990] and 1370 should be construed as the beginning of a new era of political unity and closeness between Israel and Turkey. The laicist politicians in the Turkish Government and the Zionist officials have welcomed the political union between Tel Aviv and Ankara as a means for jointly combating the trend of Islamism among the people of their respective countries.

Ankara officials have expanded their economic and trade relations with Israel to the maximum in the past three years in keeping with Western policies.

These relations were covert until 1359, before the military coup, and materialized gradually. In just over three years since the regional talks on a compromise with Israel, these talks have become overt and active. In Bahman [21 January-19 February] of 1371 Turkey upgraded its diplomatic relations with Turkey to the ambassadorial level under the aegis of which mutual economic exchanges began to increase and flourish.

Thus the visit by the Turkish prime minister to Israel last year with an entourage of six ministers and 200 Turkish industrial and business magnates was particularly significant. It was on this particular visit that the representatives of the U.S., Israeli, and Turkish intelligence, that is, the CIA, Mosad, and MIT [Turkish National Intelligence Organization] convened a joint session to

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discuss ways and means to address what is described by the Zionists as "Islamic terrorism."

The expansion in Turkish-Israeli relations has elicited the opposition of Turkey's Muslims. This opposition has acted as a constant deterrent in the path of the Zionist policies of some of the laicist elements active in the Turkish leadership.

The people and Islamic factions in Turkey believe Ankara should be self-reliant in its domestic and foreign policies and should not be subservient to foreign sources. These sources, whether they are European, Israeli, or U.S., have proved in practice that their objective in imposing their influence on Turkey is certainly not to boost the sociopolitical stability, strength, or grandeur of Turkey. This vast country has a brilliant history and it would be a pity for such a unique culture and history and the hopes of the Muslim people of Turkey to be ignored for the sake of the political leanings of foreigners.

Dual Containment, Conoco Affair, Mojahedin Viewed

Conoco Affair

95LA0176A Paris AL-MUHARRIR in Arabic
27 Mar 95 pp 14-15

[Article by Hasan Hamadah: "Between Conoco Issue and Inauguration of Gulf Stock Exchange; 'Containment' of Iran Presumes 'Containment' of Russia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Iranian-Russian relations are at the heart of Washington's campaign against Tehran. Time no longer permits imposing a blockade against the Islamic Republic. The industrial countries want to avoid being led by the United States down the path of the unknown. Zionism has a role in the Conoco issue. The Gulf Stock Exchange is a gift to the "openness," and the developments in Afghanistan are a prelude to striking the "regional Islamic order."

"Should we bombard ourselves?"

It is a statement that has clung to history's memory. It was made by the late French President Georges Pompidou during the so-called first "oil shock," which followed the October 1973 war.

The French president made the statement during a session in which Valery Giscard d'Estaing, the economy and finance minister at the time, suggested that France take part in occupying the oil wells in case the Americans decided to do so. The minister stressed that the proverb that says that "the absent are always wrong" had to be observed.

I recalled the statement when U.S. President Bill Clinton decided to prevent Conoco, a US oil firm owned by Dupont [Dunimore?]—a giant corporation that is active in the chemicals business—from purchasing and marketing Iranian oil.

Perhaps a comparison between the U.S. "development" and the French "statement" is misplaced, considering the ability of the United States to act, react, and receive blows. However, the comparison is permissible when the issue concerns the Europeans who observed the above proverb and did not absent themselves from "Desert Storm" in 1991. Thus, the Europeans bombarded themselves in Iraq, and in the region generally, when President Mitterand developed the conviction that whoever took part in the war would automatically get a ticket to take part in the negotiations. The result was that the Americans took from the Europeans what they wished to take and denied them what they wish to deny, thus embroiling them in a crisis. Foreign Minister Allain Jobert, during his inspection tour of the region at the head of the European "troika" delegation, characterized this crisis by saying that Europe, which has fulfilled its financial obligations, must not be excluded from political settlements with an economic-strategic aroma. This aroma spreads from U.S. criticism of Paris' and Moscow's positions, which call for amending the system of sanctions against Iraq. It also spreads from German criticism of Washington's position, which advocates boycotting Iran.

In both the Iraqi and the Iranian cases, the conditions the United States is demanding from the European allies converge in the direction of the "dual containment" plan. Implementation of this plan has been entrusted to Anthony Lake, President Bill Clinton's adviser for national security affairs.

It is undoubtedly important to conclude contracts. But what is more important is to execute the contracts. ELF, a French oil corporation, is applying the final touches to a contract to be concluded with the Iraqi government for utilization of the Majnun Island oil fields. But execution of the contract waits for the blockade to be lifted. Abolition of the blockade awaits a decision from the U.S. administration, which is not entertaining such ideas.

Let us return to Clinton's decision to prevent U.S. corporations from purchasing and marketing Iranian oil. In wake of the stormy meeting between Clinton and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl in Washington last December-January, the latter said something to the effect: How can you ask this of us when your corporations buy and market 25 percent of Iran's oil? It was then that the White House master decided that

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he had to withdraw this argument from the hands of the Europeans, especially the Germans. So, he made his decision to end the activity of corporations importing from Iran. However, this decision will not muzzle the Germans and their partners in the European Union. The year 1995 is not the year 1991 and Russia, despite its miseries, its tense domestic conditions, and its uncertain political climate, is not the Soviet Union in its final days. Moreover, today's Iran is not, despite its economic difficulties, the Iran that had just emerged from its eight-year war. What is more important than all of this is that Russian-Iranian relations are completely different from the relations that prevailed between the Soviet Union and the Islamic Republic. Today's Iran exports stability to the Islamic (formerly Soviet) republics whereas it exported revolution to them in the past. The most eloquent example of this fact is the manner with which Iran has dealt with the war of annihilation launched by the Kremlin against the Chechens, as well as Iran's tranquil, and pacifying, relations with Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Qirghizia, Azerbaijan, and Uzbekistan. The main thing for which the United States faults Iran at present is summed up in Tehran's determination to carry on with its nuclear energy research. The country that will build the nuclear reactor is called Russia.

Russian-Iranian relations have become the basis of the U.S. campaign against Iran. "Containment" of Iran goes through the "containment" of Russia now. This in itself touches on the impossible. Times have changed quickly, and no country is willing to follow the American unknown. This is what happened in Iraq in 1991 through resolutions that have turned into shackles restricting the activity of the major industrial countries, as made evident by the difficulty these countries are experiencing in their futile endeavors to amend the system of sanctions against Iraq. If the region has become accustomed to some sort of a "veto," namely the U.S. veto, to prevent any condemnation of Israel, then this region has begun to recognize a new "veto" called the "Iraqi veto." Washington will use this veto to maintain the status quo in Iraq until it finds that it is in its interest, and not in the interest of others, to lift it.

What is interesting is that in the process of preparing for the decision to prohibit Conoco, a U.S. corporation, from utilizing Iran's (?Sari) fields, three Dupont Dunimore Executive Board members voted against the contract with Tehran's government. It became subsequently evident that the three belong to the Bronfman family, a Jewish family that has its place in the world of finance and business and that includes among its members Edgar Bronfman, head of the World Jewish Council and the successor to Armand Ham [Armand Hammer] in the relations with Russia. It is true that U.S. Jewish organizations pushed the administration strongly to make the boycott decision. However, the Bronfman family role raises more than one question mark regarding the future role that Israel plans to play in the Iranian issue and in U.S.-Iranian relations, be they tense or tranquil. Within the same context, an observer cannot but pause long before the announcement about the creation of a stock exchange in Manama, the capital of Bahrain, in implementation of a resolution taken by the Gulf Cooperation Council in 1983 to establish a major Gulf stock exchange market. Why has it taken 12 years to implement the resolution?

To have a poor opinion of something is to be astute. This, at least, is what we have been taught by those who have tumbled one over the other in their rush to normalize relations with Israel. Should we exclude the possibility that the concurrent birth of the "Gulf stock exchange" and the "openness" is tantamount to a visa given to the Zionists to assume control of fates of the stock exchange of pearls in the worry-laden Gulf waters?

The only thing one can confirm is that it is not easy to impose a blockade on Iran. In addition to the development that has occurred in the geopolitical and geostrategic givens of the region south of Russia, Iran's role within the Economic Cooperation Group, which convened its summit nine days ago in Islamabad, makes one believe that the United States views with extreme concern the "regional Islamic order" consisting of Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey, and the six "southern belt" states. It seems that the United States is determined to keep this "order" from seeing the light, starting with Afghanistan and with its mojahedin war, which offers a sample of what could develop in the neighboring countries. It is most likely that this is the form that will be assumed by the blockade that Washington is trying to impose on Iran.

Economy comes first and last. It suffices the observer to ponder the forays and rounds the Israelis have made in the six "security belt" states, where the Shaul Eizenberg Group has established a cotton monopoly for decades to come.

Dual Containment

95LA0176B Paris AL-MUHARRIR in Arabic
27 Mar 95 p 15

[Unattributed article: "What Is New in America Toward Iraq and Iran; Washington Replaces 'Dual Containment' Policy by 'Single Containment' Policy; Next 20 Years Needed To Change Conditions in Iran in U.S. Interest; Prevention of Any Rapprochement Between Egypt and

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Iran; Creation of Estrangement Between Beirut and Damascus; Elimination of Resolution 425"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo—Exclusive Dispatch—Within the context of the new U.S. preparations for new strategies in the Middle East region, the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee has completed drafting a strategy that is being currently examined by U.S. national security officials before persuading U.S. President Bill Clinton to approve it and to consider it a basis for dealing with Iraq and Iran. These two countries are characterized by the new strategy as the most significant obstacle in the face of the region's peace and stability.

The strategy drafted by the U.S. Senate calls for accelerating implementation of the dictates and methods of action it lists on the grounds that Iraq and Iran will benefit from complexities of the Arab-Israeli peace process to engage in activities that destroy regional stability and cooperation.

The new strategy underlines a number of basic provisions, namely:

First, rejection of the "dual containment" policy in dealing with the two countries and the replacement of this policy by a "single containment" policy. This provision means that, despite the threats that Iraq and Iran pose, each of them poses a distinctive threat to the region's other countries. The Iranians try to create theocratic governments in the majority of the neighboring countries by supporting terrorist operations and strengthening the various activities of the religious groups influencing the region's security. Iran cannot be in a state of peace with the United States and cannot join a U.S.-Iranian understanding to protect strategic interests. The new strategy rejects the conventional approach of provoking domestic activities against Iran because any new government arriving in Iran under the umbrella of the balance of forces existing there will be even worse than the current government. The time span within which conditions of the domestic balance of forces can develop in the interest of the Americans "could take the next 20 years. An Iranian government capable of an understanding with the United States could arrive then." The containment policy to be applied against Iran must not emanate from Iran but from outside it and from the countries surrounding it. It is essential to "impose tight" political, economic, and military "regional isolation on the Iranians." This U.S. policy must be based on denying Iranians the ability to develop their political relations with any Arab country primarily; with any Asian countries in the second place; and then with any European countries in the third place. This policy will compel the Iranians to retreat to self-isolation, to seek solutions to their problems, and to abandon their ambitious plan for the region. The paper drafted in this regard expresses concern over the endeavors made from time to time to boost Egyptian-Iranian contacts. It emphasizes that, despite what seems to be complex disputes between the Egyptians and Iranians, both sides continue to share a common desire to reduce the dangers and likely consequences of these disputes.

The paper sees that freezing the status quo regarding Iran's occupation of the three UAE islands or intensifying this problem, while establishing that the intensification elements must not reach the extent of Iran's use of its military force against the Gulf states, could represent a significant U.S. card in maintaining the Iranian-Arab estrangement generally and the Iranian-Gulf estrangement in particular.

The paper adds that it is important to persuade all countries of the world, led by the Asian countries, to terminate any kind of military contacts with the Iranians, especially within the framework of the so-called "strangulation of the Iranian nuclear project."

The paper does not believe that the Iranians have yet developed their nuclear project to the point of posing a threat to neighboring countries.

The other point noted in the new strategy concerns the development of an organizational bond with some Iranian opposition elements through the U.S. National Security Agency and the U.S. intelligence jointly. The paper says the organizational bond should seek to infiltrate the Iranian society from within so as to gather the largest amount possible of information on Iran's domestic conditions. The bond should also prepare these opposition elements to assume power in Iran when the domestic balance of forces alters. As for the "single containment" policy concerning Iraq, the paper asserts that confronting Iraq under the current circumstances seems to be easier than confronting the Iranians. The paper adds that safeguarding U.S. interests and stability lies in removing Saddam Husayn's regime from power.

The paper believes that changing the Iraqi government could produce a positive yield, embodied in the assumption of power by individuals who develop relations of mutual trust and appreciation between Americans and Iraqis. Even though this policy advocates the principle of isolating Saddam Husayn's regime, it says it is necessary to deal with it in order to promote unrest inside Iraq and to establish contacts with second-line Iraqi leaders in preparation for their assumption of power. The strategy also calls for continuing the economic blockade; perpetuating Iraq's estrangement from the Gulf; and creating tensions between Iraq, Syria, and Egypt

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in order to maintain an unbridgeable disagreement gap among them. It further calls for bringing Jordan closer to the Gulf states and Israel and bolstering their cooperation policies in order to ensure that Jordanian-Iraqi rapprochement does not grow stronger. Moreover, it calls for keeping the dossier of Iraqi mass-destruction weapons open and for watching any kind of Iraqi military contacts with any country. The paper sees that the Iranians and the Iraqis cannot form a united front against the region's other countries or against the region's security and stability interests because the nature of the two sides' intellectual starting points and of their profound historical disputes does not allow the two sides to agree on common goals. The Iranian theocratic starting point seeks, as the Americans see it, to devour Iraq as part of the scheme drawn up for the region's countries. But the Iranians see that this goal should be postponed at the present time insofar as Iraq is concerned and should be accelerated and accomplished in full in each of Egypt and the Gulf states.

Second, the paper sees that Iran and Iraq seek to influence the peace process, each in its own direction, through the "Lebanese swamp," as the paper puts it.

The new strategy demands that utmost priority be devoted to the Lebanese front in the coming phase; that efforts be made to separate the Lebanese from the Syrians; and that resolution 425, which governs the Lebanese track, be viewed independently of all the other resolutions and referential points in accordance with which the region's peace process marches.

Third, the third alternative revealed by the strategy paper drafted by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is its call for efforts to contain U.S. disagreement with moderate governments in the region, including Egypt, and to strengthen these governments so they will play an active role in determining the regional future of the region's countries. The paper emphasizes the importance of continued relations of economic and military cooperation with Egypt. It believes that this cooperation should assume the form of a unidimensional link consisting of three parts: Egypt, Jordan, and Israel. The paper says this trio can be joined by some Gulf states afterward. The new strategy urges the need to deal most seriously and decisively with the nuclear problem in the Middle East. It also urges that Washington reject half-solutions that tempt some countries to acquire nuclear weapons.

In this regard, the paper notes that some Arab countries, such as Libya, Iraq, Syria, and Egypt, are likely to acquire nuclear weapons or mass-destruction weapons in the coming phase. The paper expresses the fear that, in the future, the nuclear problem will turn into a problem of regional groups, be they big or small, possessing such weapons. Despite all these dangers, the paper does not touch on the issue of Israeli nuclear armament.

Mojahedin Discussed

95LA0176C Paris AL-MUHARRIR in Arabic 27 Mar 95 p 14

[Unattributed article: "State Department Neglects Them and Mojahedi e-Khalq Wager on Gingrich; Iranian Opposition Censures Washington"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington—Exclusive AL-MUHARRIR Dispatch—There are between the U.S. State Department and Mojahedi e-Khalq, an Iranian opposition organization, relations about which the least that can be said is that they are grim. The State Department refuses to bestow "legitimacy" upon the organization, and the organization leaves no opportunity pass without issuing reports countering State Department reports and criticizing the so-called "Tehran lobby" within the U.S. State Department. What condition have relations between the two parties reached?

"To deal with those who are on the ground" is a firm rule in the U.S. foreign policy to which Washington adheres, with few exceptions. The example of Cuba is nothing but proof of these exceptions. As for Iran, the country that the United States lists as a hostile country, Washington is careful to rely on a policy that contains a certain degree of balance between absolute hostility and refrainment from giving the Iranian opposition a weight incompatible, to date, with its actual weight and influence in the field. This policy of balance arouses the wrath of most Iranian opposition tendencies, led by Mojahedi e—Khalq, which is the only opposition organization that clashes militarily with the Iranian regular forces. Moreover, Mojahedi e-Khalq is the most active in Western Europe and North America.

The Middle East Desk of the U.S. State Department submitted to the congress (28 October 1994) a report that offered information and analyses that were in total contradiction with the projections of the various opposition tendencies, and especially with Mojahedi e-Khalq's projections. The gist of the 41-page report is that it is futile to waste time by making a losing wager on the Iranian opposition.

The report of the Middle East Desk, which is supervised by Robert Pelletreau, was drafted, and its information was gathered in accordance with the provisions of the U.S. law, particularly provision 523 of the law passing the State Department budget for fiscal 1994-95. This fact reflects the serious and official nature of the study that

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was drafted on the Iranian opposition, led by Mojahedi e-Khalq. The request to draft the report was approved by U.S. congressional committees, and the approval was transmitted to the State Department last April. The law demanded that the State Department be impartial in its evaluation of the Iranian situation and that it not disregard the presence of Iranian opposition groups in the United States—groups whose viewpoint had to be heard.

When the State Department issued its report, Mojahedi e-Khalq's Foreign Relations Committee hastened to respond through a letter [or book] in which it included details of the U.S. policy toward Iran. The letter denounced the so-called "Iranian lobby" in the State Department—a lobby that obstructs the establishment of direct and official institutional relations between Mojahedi e-Khalq and the U.S. Government.

The letter notes the statements of numerous U.S. politicians and officials hostile to Iran and points out the contradiction between these statements and the U.S. policy. The organization's letter expresses astonishment at the contradiction between Christopher Warren's statements and the statements of House Speaker Newt Gingrich, who has called for "changing the ruling regime in Iran."

Mojahedi e-Khalq does not criticize Gingrich at all. Gingrich does not control foreign policy. However, Mojahedi e-Khalq hopes that Washington will implement statements made by somebody who is as high as the House of Representatives speaker. Newt Gingrich is well known for his strong enthusiasm for the Israeli policy and his strong hostility to Arabs and Muslims.

It is noticed that Mojahedi e-Khalq has rejected the charge that some people make against it, accusing it of subservience to Baghdad. In the letter, the organization says that it "believes in democracy and pluralism and respects personal freedom" and that "it has been and continues to be independent," whether during years of the Iraq-Iran war or during the invasion of Kuwait. The organization also says that it does not at all interfere in the region's affairs.

The battle between Mojahedi e-Khalq and the State Department is ongoing. Signs indicate that the Iranian opposition's efforts will focus on persuading the U.S. Congress to make the State Department back down on its position and to launch official dialogue with the opposition. The sternness displayed recently by President Clinton through his decision to prohibit U.S. oil corporations from purchasing and marketing Iranian oil—a decision supported by U.S. Jewish organizations and by the radical republican tendency within the congress—may facilitate Mojahedi e-Khalq's task. However, the administration is the party with the final decision, and the predominant tendency within the State Department vis-a-vis this organization is very negative, despite the steps taken by this organization to sway the U.S. administration. These steps include the visit made by Mas'ud Rajavi, Mojahedi e-Khalq's leader, to Gaza Strip and his congratulations to Yasir Arafat, the Palestine Authority chairman, on his return to the occupied territories.

Pakistan

Activists Protest at U.S. Center in Lahore

BK1705035395 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 17 May 95 p 12

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Lahore, May 16 — Hundreds of workers of Tehrike Jaferia Pakistan (TJP) Lahore on Tuesday [16 May] afternoon held a protest demonstration in front of American Ce[illegible] Lahore to condemn the Indian government for desc[illegible]ration of Dargah Charar Sharif in Occupied Kashmir and the America's biased attitude against Muslim countries.

The TJP workers set on fire the US flag and the effigies of President Bill Clinton and Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao.

President TJP Lahore Qaiser Dokhari, Hafiz Kazarn Raza and Oan Abbas briefly addressed the demonstration. They said that US ambassador in India had recently visited Pakistan to persuade Pakistani rulers to help India in holding election in occupied Kashmir. They warned that the people of Pakistan and Kashmir would never allow the Pakistani rulers to help India in holding of election in the held Valley.

The demonstrators also raised full throated slogans against India, United States and Israel. During the demonstration a heavy police contingent cordoned off the building of American Centre to protect it from the demonstrators.

Meanwhile, a meeting of the ulema of various schools of thought was held in the committee room of Ittehad Banul Muslemeen Secretariat. The meeting was chaired by Punjab Auqaf Minister Chaudhry Shah Nawaz Cheema. The Minister and participants of the meeting condemned the Indian government for the desecration of Muslim holy places in held Kashmir and expressed their full solidarity with the people of Kashmir and their just struggle to force Indian government to hold plebiscite in the Valley.

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Editorial: U.S. Friendship To Stay 'Marginal'

BK1805071895 Islamabad THE NATION in English 18 May 95 p 6

[Editorial: "Seeking US friendship"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Though there is still many a slip between the cup and the lip, a beginning has been made in the US to seek changes in the Pressler Law, the singular manifestation of discrimination and arbitrary action against Pakistan. The proposed amendment of the Pressler Law moved on May 11 by Congressman Bereuter, which seeks to remove restrictions on economic, humanitarian and development assistance to Pakistan and authorise the US administration to release non-lethal military equipment sent to the US for repair before 1990, has been added to the Foreign Assistance Authorisation Bill, and will be voted by the House Committee this week. The move has been seen as the first concrete change in Pak-US relations since October 1990 when sanctions were imposed on Pakistan under the Pressler Law. And since Pakistan's case now has considerable support in both Houses of Congress, it is being hoped that at long last the Pressler Amendment will be substantively undone. Nevertheless, the attempt to make some amends for the unfair deal given to Pakistan over the past five years should not be construed as a basic shift in the US policy towards South Asia, or to put it bluntly, it is not the signal for which the country's ruling elite has been desperately trying to curry favour with Washington. The Americans are indeed no longer pushy about Pakistan's nuclear programme or apprehensive of Pakistan's 'terrorist connection', and may well be prepared to spare Pakistan the kind of browbeating for which it had been singled out since 1990. But it would be naive to anticipate the beginning of a new era of Pak-US friendship and cooperation and nourish the hopes of Americans assuming the role of Pakistan's patron-saint.

The message has been clearly brought home by Washington's failure to condemn India over the Charar Sharif outrage. The Pakistani Ambassador who delivered Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's letter addressed to President Clinton was told by a State Department official that the US was willing to play a role to help resolve the Kashmir dispute if it was invited by both India and Pakistan. The message is loud and clear. The Americans are not prepared to take sides in any Pakistan-India conflict, no matter who is right and who is wrong, as long as it does not disturb their own scheme of things for the region. And by all accounts, containing India's military build-up or aggressive designs in the region is not on the US agenda. The US policies are dictated by its grand design and its system or relationships with other countries. It would be futile for Islamabad to go on trying for US patronage and hope for American intervention in disputes that may be crucial for Pakistan's security but are not seen by the Americans as a threat to 'the democratic way of life'. Notwithstanding abuses of human rights in Occupied Kashmir — an issue that Islamabad thinks would prompt the Americans to censure India — the US is predisposed to zero in on Iran and spare no effort to isolate it. If Pakistan is committed to pursue its foreign policy in accordance with its national interest and is not willing to act as a surrogate for fighting alien causes, the new-born Pak-US friendship is doomed to remain a marginal affair.

Bhutto Comments on Kashmir, Indian 'Agression'

BK1805033395 Islamabad THE NATION in English 18 May 95 pp 1, 13

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Khangarh (APP) — Every Pakistani is ready to sacrifice his life for the cause of Pakistan, said the Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto adding "Pakistan is fully capable to give a befitting reply in case of any aggression".

Benazir Bhutto while talking to APP and Reuters here on Wednesday [17 May] said that Pakistan would continue its support to Kashmiri people only on the basis of principles.

She said Indian leadership is mistaken that Pakistan would withdraw its support to Kashmiri people following threats of aggression.

She said "We can't be deterred from any threat of aggression and in case of hostility Pakistan will answer back most effectively".

The Premier said India has come to know that her grip over Kashmir was weakening and has been trying to get back the issue in its favour through spreading panic and acts of terrorism in Held Kashmir.

She said the desecration on Dargah Charar Sharif (Hazrat Nuruddin Wali) and its adjacent Mosque is a part of such attempts.

She said India wants to spread panic before holding "socalled" elections in the held valley as she wants to achieve favourable results in the polls.

The Prime Minister said all such incidents including attack on Golden Temple, demolition of Babri Mosque, siege of Dargah Hazratbal and the attack on Charar Sharif Dargah and Mosque are the clear examples that India does not have honour or regard for sacred places.

She said the Indian intellectuals, writers and peace-loving people have highly deplored this act of their government.

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The Prime Minister said that India is facing leadership crisis and has failed to maintain its claim of a secular state.

She said it was high time that Indian government should invite All Parties Hurriat Conference to seek the political solution of the problem through dialogue.

Responding to a question, the Prime Minister said that Pakistan's nuclear programme was perfectly peaceful. She further said that India has proved before the world by producing mass destruction missiles programme that it has been violating non-proliferation, but it was not by any other country, she added. "Now every country will have to be conscious about her self defence," the Premier said.

As regards US-Pak relations, she said that during the last 20 months there has been a positive understanding between the two countries.

She said that United States earlier wanted roll back of Pakistani peaceful nuclear programme but now the two countries have come to an understanding that these issues can be resolved through multi- lateral approach. This, she added, "is a vindication of our principled stand."

Secondly, she said a conspiracy was hatched to declare Pakistan as terrorist State but now, she expressed satisfaction that the US President has acknowledged that Pakistan was affectively countering terrorism.

Besides, there has been an understanding that Pakistan has been playing a positive role for the defence of freedom. Pakistani soldiers, she said had been in the fore front of the UN peace keeping forces.

Pakistan has fulfilled its responsibly in meeting challenges like terrorism and narcotics which had helped to enhance its dignity and credibility.

Benazir Bhutto said that she wanted amicable solution to the outstanding issues with United States like delivery of spare parts, OPEC Insurance, handing over of equipment or return of paid amount on this account.

"It would be fair enough that if these petty issues are resolved amicably, otherwise the government will have to consider other options available," she said.

"We earnestly desire that all such issues be settled down at the earliest", she said. She hoped "If not today, these would be settled tomorrow. We are not in a hurry. Because we are not ready to pay any price", the Premier said.

APP from United Nations adds: Pakistan has drawn the attention of the Security Council to the threats being made by the Indian Cabinet Ministers about waging a new war with Pakistan.

In a letter addressed to Mr M. Jean-Bernard Merimee of France, the current President of the Security Council, the Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, said that unless appropriate measures were taken to address the dispute in line with the United Nations resolutions, peace and security would remain elusive, and the people of Kashmir would continue to suffer.

The Foreign Minister's letter was handed over to the President of the Security Council by Ahmad Kamal, Pakistan's permanent representative to the United Nations.

The Foreign Minister urged Mr. Jean-Bernard Merimee to bring to the attention of the Security Council members the grave situation prevailing in Jammu and Kashmir, particularly in the aftermath of the desecration and destruction of Charar Sharif shrine and mosque complex.

The Foreign Minister's letter pointed out that the 15th century shrine of the Sufi saint of Kashmir, Sheikh Nuruddin Wali, as well as the adjacent mosque and its attached educational institutions and library, were all desecrated and burnt to the ground in a premeditated and well planned assault by Indian security forces on the town of Charar Sharif in Held Kashmir. This action, which was deliberately timed to coincide with Fidul Azha, an important Islamic religious festival, has not only sent shock waves of resentment amongst the entire Kashmiri population, but also incensed Muslims all over the world.

Sardar Asif pointed out that the wooden complex was a unique historical and cultural heritage and its loss was irreparable.

He said the attack on the towns of Charar Sharif by the Indian forces has also resulted in widespread destruction of the houses and shops. Over a thousand such structures have been ransacked and gutted in flames. A large number of civilian casualties have occurred in the military action conducted by the Indian forces.

The Foreign Minister pointed out that the grave situation obtaining in Held Kashmir was the result of the brutal military actions of the Indian government to suppress the people of Kashmir, and to deny them the right of self-determination duly mandated by Security Council resolutions and solemnly pledged by both India and Pakistan.

He said that as long as the resolutions of the Security Council on Jammu and Kashmir remained unimplemented, incidents of violations of the fundamental

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rights of the people of the Kashmir would continue to occur.

He said that the Jammu and Kashmir dispute had bedevilled relations between India and Pakistan for 48 years, and unless appropriate measures were taken to address the dispute, peace and security in the region would remain elusive.

Security Council Notified of Indian 'Threats'

BK1705082795 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan has drawn the attention of the UN Security Council to the threats being made by the Indian cabinet ministers about waging a new war with Pakistan. In a letter addressed to the current president of the Security Council, Mr. M. Jean-Bernard Merimee, of France, the foreign minister, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, said that unless appropriate measures were taken to address the Kashmir dispute in the line with the United Nations resolutions, peace and security would remain elusive and the people of Kashmir would continue to suffer. The foreign minister's letter was handed over to the president of the Security Council by Mr. Ahmad Kamal, Pakistan's permanent representative to the United Nations.

The foreign minister urged the Security Council members to study the grave situation prevailing in Jammu and Kashmir, particularly in the aftermath of the desecration and destruction of Charar Sharif shrine and mosque complex. The foreign minister's letter pointed out that the 15th century shrine of the saint of Kashmir as well the adjacent mosque and its attached educational institutions and library were all desecrated and burnt to the ground in a premeditated and well-planned assault by Indian forces on the town of Charar Sharif in Kashmir.

The foreign minister pointed out that the Indian Government was suppressing the people of Kashmir and denying them the right of self-determination mandated by Security Council resolutions. He said that as long as these resolutions remained unimplemented, incidents of violations of fundamental rights of the people of Kashmir would continue.

Ninth Joint Economic Commission With Iran Held

Minister Arrives; Goals Outlined

LD1605133995 Tehran IRNA in English 1220 GMT 16 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, May 16, IRNA — Minister of Roads and Transportation Akbar Torkan arrived here Monday [15 May] heading a delegation to take part at the 9th Iran-Pakistan joint economic commission.

Increase in the volume of exchanges and expansion of cooperation in the areas of banking, aviation, shipping and telecommunications will be on the table at the commission which will be held May 16-17.

Volume of trade exchanges between Iran and Pakistan stood at about dlrs. 250 million last year. The two sides have voiced readiness to increase it.

Representatives from the Ministries of Industries and Commerce and from several private sector companies accompany Torkan in his visit.

Experts from both countries during the past few days have worked out on the draft of a letter of understanding to be signed by Iranian and Pakistani ministers.

Pakistani minister of state for economic and financial affairs is the co-chairman of the joint commission.

Minister Meets Bhutto, Reviews Progress

BK1605135595 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 16 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Iranian minister for roads and transportation, Mr. Akbar Torkan, called on Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in Islamabad today. He apprised the prime minister about the deliberations of the Iran-Pakistan joint economic commission meeting. The Iranian minister expressed satisfaction at the progress of talks and said a number of agreements have been concluded and some were near conclusion. He informed the prime minister that agreements have been concluded on the export of sugar plants and rice from Pakistan and bulldozers from Iran. He said agreements for the construction of gas pipeline and roads linking Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iran are being finalized.

During the meeting, the destruction of Charar Sharif by Indian Armed Forces and the situation in Afghanistan and other matters of bilateral and international concern were also discussed.

The ninth session of the Pakistan-Iran Joint Ministerial Commission began in Islamabad today. Ways and means to explore new avenues for expanding economic relations between the two countries came up for discussion. In his opening remarks at the meeting, Adviser to the Prime Minister for Finance and Economic Affairs Mr. V.A. Jaffery expressed the need for enhancing economic ties between Pakistan and Iran. He said presently the overall trade between the two countries is not commensurate with potential and it needs to be expanded. He said Pakistan-Iran Joint Ministerial Commission has

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served as a useful institution for identifying new opportunities for increasing bilateral cooperation in the trade and economic fields. He also outlined incentives offered by Pakistan Government to foreign investors.

Leader of the Iranian delegation Minister for Transportation Mr. Akbar Torkan emphasized the need for removing bottlenecks in promotion of trade and commercial ties. He also suggested various incentives to traders of the two countries.

Ministers Discuss Industrial Ties

BK1705095195 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cooperation in the industrial, technical, energy, and communication sectors between Pakistan and Iran would cement the existing relations for the mutual benefit of the people of two countries. This was stated by the federal minister for industries and production, Brigadier Retired Mohammad Asghar, while talking to the visiting Iranian minister for road and transport, Mr. Akbar Torkan, in Islamabad.

Brig. Retd. Mohammad Asghar said Pakistan was ready to extend its cooperation and technical assistance in establishing the refinery, gas pipeline, sugar cane factory, and other building material equipment. The Iranian minister said that Iran was interested in supplying the iron ore for Pakistani steel mills.

Official Forsees Large Investment

BK1705061795 Islamabad THE NATION in English 17 May 95 p 9

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad (APP) — The Adviser to P.M. [prime minister] for Finance and Economic Affairs, V.A. Jaffery, has expressed the need for taking specific measures to enhance the level of trade and development of economic relations between Pakistan and Iran, said a handout.

In his opening statement as a leader of Pakistan delegation at the 9th session of Pak-Iran Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC), which commenced here Tuesday [16 May], Jaffery said that the level of overall trade between our two countries was not commensurate with the potential and needed to be expanded. We must devise ways and means to increase the level of trade in the forthcoming days, he added.

Taking about the performance of Pak-Iran JMC, the Adviser said that it has served as a useful institutional arrangement for reviewing the existing relations as well as identifying new opportunities for increasing the level of cooperation between the two sides.

He said, the Commission has no doubt made useful contribution in promoting economic cooperation but it needed to undertake greater efforts to explore new avenues for expanding economic relations between the two countries.

Jaffery also outlined various incentives offered by Pakistan government to foreign investors, and expressed the confidence that a large Iranian investment will be forthcoming particularly in the fields of oil and gas, road, railways, petrochemicals and textile, etc.

The Adviser to the Prime Minister highlighted various measures taken by the government to put the economy of the country on sound footing. In this regard, he particularly mentioned the privatisation programme, incentives offered in energy sector for foreign investment and steps taken to reduce fiscal deficit.

The leader of the Iranian delegation and Minister of Road and Transportation, Akbar Torkan, in his opening address, emphasised the need of resolving all bottlenecks, in promotion of trade and commercial ties between the two countries. For enhancement of Pak-Iran trade, he also suggested various incentives to the traders of the two countries. "For development of trade we have to go through hard ways", he remarked.

Earlier, the Iranian Minister held meeting with the adviser to P.M. for finance and Economic Affairs, Jaffery and discussed ways and means to promote bilateral cooperation especially in the fields of oil and gas, textile and communications.

Leghari, Minister 'Keen' on Trade Ties

BK1705142995 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Iran and Pakistan should identify specific areas for further increasing trade and economic cooperation. This was stated by President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari while talking to the Iranian minister for roads and transport, Mr. Akbar Torkan, who called on him in Islamabad today.

The president said Iran and Pakistan have complementary economies and both countries could have mutually beneficial projects in various sectors. He said Pakistan is keen to have Iranian gas and would also like to import bulldozers from Iran. Similarly, Pakistan would like to sell its rice and export sugar plants to Iran. The president said it is very important to develop all means of communication on land and through sea between Iran and Pakistan to integrate our two economies for benefiting from bilateral trade, as well as from trade with Central Asian and other countries in the region.

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The Iranian minister for roads and transport said Iran is also desirous of increasing its trade and economic cooperation with Pakistan.

Meeting Concludes; Agreements Signed

BK1705155795 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Pakistan and Iran have signed an agreement on maritime cooperation and documents on accelerating cooperation in transportation, communications, oil and gas, trade and banking, industry, and marketing.

The agreement and documents were signed in Islamabad today by V.A. Jaffery, adviser on financial and economic affairs, and Akbar Torkan, Iranian minister for roads and transport, at the conclusion of the two-day session of the Pakistan-Iran Joint Ministerial Commission. They said that steps are being taken to lay a gas pipeline from Iran to Pakistan. Both sides have agreed to set up border markets to promote bilateral trade.

Answering a question, Torkan said he appreciated Pakistan's policy of not supporting the economic sanctions announced by the United States against his country. Answering another question, he said Iran condemns all activities against Muslims and the desecration of Muslim holy places. Iran has already issued a statement on the desecration of the Charar Sharif shrine and the adjacent mosque.

V.A. Jaffery said Pakistan hopes for joint ventures and cooperation with Iran in industry, trade, energy, telecommunications, roads, transportation, and shipping.

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